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AURORA

SPECULATIVE FEMINISM

SF





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Why You Got This Issue

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SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624

Evolving Smarts

Thrilling Evolution Funnies

He loved her and she loved him, but the Genetics Board did not agree...



Robert Whitaker

The Haganenons of Assisyphis-3 have the most impatient chromosomes of any life form in the galaxy. Whereas most races are content to evolve slowly and carefully over thousands of generations, discarding a prehensile toe here, hazarding another nostril there, the Haganenons would do for Charles Darwin what a squadron of Arcturan Stunt Apples would have done for Sir Isaac Newton. Their genetic structure, based on the quadruple-striated octohelix, is so chronically unstable that, far from passing their basic shape on to their children, they will quite frequently evolve several times over lunch. But they do this with such reckless abandon that if—sitting at a table—they're unable to reach a coffee spoon, they're liable, without a moment's consideration, to mutate into something with far longer arms but which is probably quite incapable of drinking the coffee.

Episode 6
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, by Douglas Adams



Richard Bruning

THE STARS SAY THE GODS ARE ANGRY. A CUTE UNICORN SHALL BE PUBLICLY EMBARRASSED!

THE STARS WARN AGAINST TRAVEL...MAYBE I'D BETTER SKIP THE CON THIS WEEKEND!

BEFORE | AFTER

Jeanne Gomoll

Two prominent Melbourne, Australia, researchers believe it is possible for men to bear children.

They say there is no biological reason why an embryo fertilized in a laboratory could not be implanted in a man's abdomen, mature and be delivered by Caesarean section.

"The necessary hormones are produced by the fetus," Geoffrey Thorburn of Monash University said yesterday. "You would expect the man to get breast enlargement and morning sickness and the other changes you see in a woman during pregnancy."

The researchers noted that embryos had been successfully implanted in male mice.

The Philadelphia Inquirer, by Connie Langland, 1981 July 30 (submitted by Miriam Greenwald)

LOOK HERE, I SAID I WOULDN'T MIND CARRYING THE KID TO TERM, BUT HORMONE SHOTS SO I CAN BREAST FEED ARE OUT!



Robert Whitaker



NEWS ALL THE THAT FI

About This Issue

"The Future of Human Evolution" is an enormous topic, and this issue by no means exhausts it. Because of the eternal constraints of Space and Time, you won't see anything here about sociobiology. Or radiation-damaged mutants. Or bald-headed, big-brained, 28-toothed weaklings. Or Marching Morons (AKA the Moral Majority?). And nobody even mentions "Phylogeny Recapitulates Ontogeny". But we do hit on a lot of the social aspects of evolution, with respect to anthropology, economics, feminism, history, and medicine, just to list a few topics. So start reading and enjoy. And remember, we love to get letters of comment!

About Future Issues

Themes for future issues are as follows:

- 21° Technology in an Androgynous Future
- 22° Time and Space Travel
- 23° Science Fiction and Education
- 24° Special Issue on a Seldom-Discussed but Deserving Woman SF Writer. (Send in your nominations!)

If you are interested in contributing to any of these issues, or if you'd like to suggest themes for future issues, please contact us. Guidelines for submitting material are available if you send us a SASE.

Errata

On the cover of #19, we inadvertently omitted the pot of petunias. On page 10, the correct Berlitz number should be 180286. (96.214 is the number for Portuguese) On Page 15, Lines 4 and 5 of the second column should read, "about science fiction generally and science-fiction poetry specifically".

Wilfred Beaver Dies

After a short illness, Dr. Wilfred Beaver of Sparta, Wisconsin died in late September. A retired engineer, Dr. Beaver was one of the first non-Madison members of SF³, and maintained a lively correspondence with us.

WisCon UpDate

Since last issue we added Terry Carr as editor guest of honor. Carr and Writer GoH Suzette Haden Elgin will address the convention Saturday evening after a buffet-style meal. Come prepared for good food and good conversation. For more information, see the ad in the back of the issue.

SF³ Annual Meeting Held

On 1981 September 12, at the annual SF³ corporation meeting, the following officers were elected:

- ♦President: Perri Corrck-West
- ♦Vice-President: Janice Bogstad
- ♦Recording Secretary: Jeanne Gomoll
- ♦Corresponding Secretary: Philip Kaveny
- ♦Treasurer: Diane Martin

In addition, the following people were appointed as heads of our standing committees:

- ♦Convention Committee: Patty Lucas, Hank Luttrell, and Georgie Schnobrich
- ♦Media Production Committee: Kim Nash
- ♦Programming Committee: Philip Kaveny
- ♦Publications Committee: Diane Martin
- ♦Resources Committee: Richard Russell

Minutes of this meeting are available if you send us a SASE.



Jeanne Gomo

SF³ Programs

The SF³ Program Committee sponsors a program on the last Wednesday of each month (except July and August) at Union South, 227 N. Randall Av. in Madison. Past and future topics include:

- ♦Sep.: analysis of the Hugo results
- ♦Oct.: "The Art of Steven Vincent Johnson" a slide show presented by SVJ himself.
- ♦Nov.: "Robert Bloch—His Wisconsin Years" a talk presented by Perri Corrick-West.
- ♦Dec.: Dead-of-Winter film festival
- ♦Jan.: WisCon previews

On other Wednesdays, the group assembles at Nick's Restaurant and Bar, 226 State St.

All SF fans are invited to show up for any of these events. The standard starting time is 7:30, and it's always free.

The SF Book of the Month Discussion Circle has scheduled discussions for the third Thursday of each month (also at 7:30 p.m.). Here is the winter schedule:

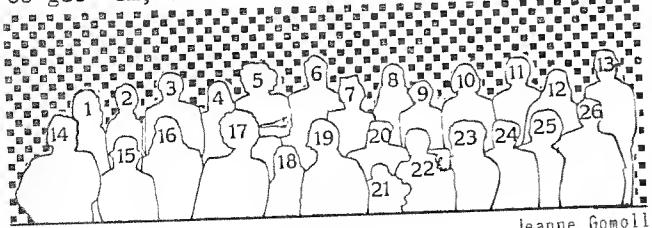
♦Dec: *Riddley Walker* by Russell Hoban, hosted by Diane Martin & Richard Russell, 2619 Kendall Av., 233-0326

♦Jan.: The Camber series by Katherine Kurtz: *Camber of Culdi*, *Saint Camber*, and *Camber the Heretic*, hosted by Susan Balliette, 4302 Major Av., 222-6642.

Again, all are welcome. It's useful, but by no means necessary, to have read the book. Pretzels are also optional.

Individual Events

In addition to publishing *The Midwest Bookwatch* and producing a weekly half-hour television book review program on Madison's public access channel, Cable 4, Jim has branched out to become a partner in a new bookstore. It's called Books Upstairs, and is located at 162 E. Main Street, Stoughton, WI 53589. Jim has also been invited by Van Nostrand Reinhold to speak at a conference in New York City next month, discussing "The Utilization of Cable Television as an Advertising Medium". And Jim is producing a series of videotape advertising tapes for a number of major publishers. Go get 'em, Jim!



The SF³ Collating Team

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Diane Martin | 14. Philip Kaveny |
| 2. Perri Corrick-West | 15. Susan Balliette |
| 3. Greg Rihn | 16. Janice Bogstad |
| 4. Cathy Gilligan | 17. Hank Luttrell |
| 5. Paul Zrimsek | 18. Patty Lucas |
| 6. Richard S. Russell | 19. Peter Theron |
| 7. Marge Roberts | 20. Kim Nash |
| 8. Joyce Thompson | 21. Liana Nash |
| 9. Georgie Schnobrich | 22. Lucy Nash |
| 10. Jeanne Gomoll | 23. Debra Schroeder |
| 11. James Andrew Cox | 24. Chas Kenyon |
| 12. Susan Kinast-Porter | 25. Steven V. Johnson |
| 13. Tom Porter | 26. Dennis Hackbart |

Perri Corrick-West gave a talk on Robert Bloch at BoucherCon, the annual mystery fans' convention, held in Milwaukee 1981 Oct. 9-11.

Denvention 2 art show attendees voted Steven Vincent Johnson's painting, "Double Sunset", second place in the best professional SF category. (Michael Whelan won first place.)

The second edition of Richard West's *Annotated Checklist of the Works by and on J. R. R. Tolkien* was published in November by Kent State University Press.

THE VOLPLANING (from "Time Shards")

Andrew Joron
and
Robert Frazier

Here the flesh screams woman.
Here the marrow rings under the hammers of
gravity,
pale rays turn deep amethyst,
swirling phantasms rush past,
even the dust is annihilated.

Minds burning with ellipses,
we spin a topography of thought for her,
our clone sister, bone sister, black hole
sister.

We spin sight
to guide her through temporal shoals.

Still as a peregrine on the glide,
we are poised on this event horizon
casting our psychic nets into tomorrow's
beyond.

There is no true looking into the pure black
ulcer on spacetime.

One of us "sees" her at last,
sees herself,
photocopied in countless postures.
Acetate pages overlapped in an anatomy book.
Laundry strung on the myriad timelines.

We volplane to focus these images into the
present.

A solar flare roars
through our collective agony,
and she steps forth
like Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*.

Realities exfoliate, realities evaporate
falling away into limbo.
Finally she is one of us,
one with us,
in time...

©1981 by Robert Frazier and Andrew Joron



LETTERS

Joan Hanke Woods

[Write to Aurora % SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624. Include your name and address on the letter itself. Unless you specify otherwise, each letter (1) is assumed to be publishable, and, if published, (2) is subject to editing, (3) will be listed under your name, and (4) will be listed under your address.]

After the Post-Holocaust

Valerie Eads
 % Fighting Woman News
 Box 1459 Grand Central Stn.
 New York, NY
 10163

ferred to as the "barbaric invasions" [letters, Aurora 19] and Quinn Yarbro's view of same ["No Such Thing As Tearing Down Just a Little", Janus 18] until I know what sources each used. Whichever of them reads Latin best would be my choice. Quinn's use of period details for atmosphere has

...Now I don't want to judge between Jessica Salmonson's interpretation of that period re-

always impressed me. I'm a medievalist myself [and my] renaissance colleagues were impressed as hell that I knew "all about" such folks as Pico della Mirandola, Marsilio Ficino, and Cassandra Fedele. My knowledge came from Quinn's book *The Palace*. Since Jessica's *Tomoe Gozen* doesn't claim historical accuracy either directly or indirectly, there's no way to compare the two writers as historians.

But I feel that Quinn's basic point is misunderstood. It is true that, in time of great social upheaval, such as wars and barbaric invasions, the old system breaks down and women, relative to men, may enjoy a greater range of opportunity than they did in more comfortable times. When the shit hits the fan, nobody is going to be too fussy about who pulls the plug. It is no secret that all the so-called struggling revolutionary groups that exist today exploit the lives and labor of women. And, yes, in China women are "equal" as they never were before because there is such a desperate need

for any pair of hands and because the Chinese have realized, as almost no other overpopulated country seems to have, that they are going to breed themselves out of existence unless they "do something" such as give women a new role in society. This ain't what Quinn was talking about as I understood it.

If, as Jessica claimed, the rule of Attila the Hun (never knew he had a reign) was good for trade and so on, then it wasn't a period of holocaust as I understood Quinn to mean the term. I understood her to mean after the bomb, no cities, no institutions of any kind beyond the marauding band, no law beyond one's own, no safety other than what one can make for oneself, no food other than what one can steal from someone else or hunt for oneself if one has made it to a place where any game still lives, and no safe place just over the next hill.

Assuming that I got 24 hours' notice that New York City would disappear from the face of the Earth, how would I prepare for survival? Weapons? I have two Japanese swords in working condition. One backpack that would hold a fair amount of food. Now, I have to go and get that food. First test: I can take a sword to better my chances and run the risk of being killed by someone with a .38 or just scramble and hope to get away with something useful and only minor bruises as all those poor oppressed women in the neighborhood forage through the erstwhile supermarket under the protection of their men. Then there's getting out of the city. If I tried to walk over the George Washington Bridge or through the tunnels, I'd never get out with my little backpack of food. So I have to swim the Hudson. Fortunately, I could. Could most women? So begins the westward trek. Where to? Philadelphia and Chicago ain't going to be there either. I can't just stroll down I-80 for the same reasons I can't use the bridge or tunnel. So I have to tramp through the woods in my little running shoes. The obvious thing to do is try to join up with other survivors and pool our strength. Use your own imaginations on the structure of such a group. No doubt the women would have "great opportunities" to do all sorts of things that they hadn't done before, but running the show won't be one of them. It's men who are trained to power and its exercise. And I wouldn't bet a subway token on the survival chances of an all-women's group. They'd be massacred.

Of course, there's no reason why things have to be that way. We can learn the skills of survival and power. But my experience in the self-defense and martial-arts movement gives me little hope that we ever will. I am frequently told by other women, including some of the most radical dyke separatists, that my martial-arts passion is "vicience".

My personal opinion is that the feminist utopias, such as Gearhart's *Underground*, are OK as fantasies but zilch as possibilities. The great mother is not going to return and make it all go away. All those armed revolutionary women that the feminist and leftist press is so fond of printing pictures of, if they survive, will be no better off than they were before. And, if China ever succeeds in its modernization efforts, Chinese women will

go the way of Rosie the Riveter. They will find that their half of the sky covers the kitchen. ("The revolution is over! Go cook rice, comrade.")

As for that blasted worldcon in unrati-fied Illinois in 1982. We could conceivably organize an alter(native va)cation, but we won't. A few diehards like me will stay home. I bet my bottom dollar most of the female pros will be there. I bet the con committee will run on the free labor of women. The rationalizations for being there, supporting the con, etc. will be as thick as the *Congressional Record*. And we of the lunatic fringe who will not be there and who will not be missed will not organize an event of our own. We won't be able to settle such questions as: men—the presence or absence of at altercation; GoHs—whom can we get; boys—the admittance of same into womanspace; race relations; sexual-preference relations; and on and on. Organizing a nice relaxacon as an alternative to worldcon in Chicago would be a great thing to do, but it won't be done. We'll settle for a women's room in Chicago, but, since it would be an insult to the memory of Susan Wood to put her name on it, I suggest we do honor to the victor and call it the "Phyllis Schlafly Room".

Just as a matter of curiosity, I would like to try to get a head count of female pros and sympathetic males who would attend such an event. Anybody got any ideas? Hmm?

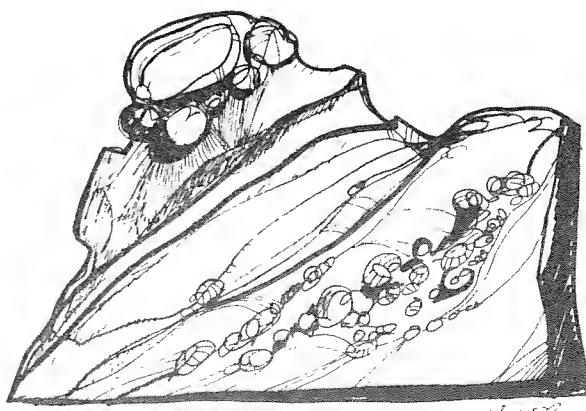
Steven P. Johnson

2995 Marion Av. #1-F
Bronx, NY
10458

Jessica Amanda

Salmonson can be a damn-
edly difficult writer to
criticize, especially if
one doesn't run off and

do some historical homework, looking for factual flaws in her work. I am less inclined to do that homework than to think about the implications of her conclusions. Offhand, I think it is grotesque to accept her conclusion that war and national emergency have been historically good for women. That may have been her point, of course. The place of women in Western civilization (and some of non-Western culture) has certainly been grotesque, and it should come as no surprise that a coherent intellectual argument can be made for the benefits of war for women. Salmonson, of course, ignores the role of women as victims in war time, and there is



Bill Retsler

no real need to go into it here: Jessica wasn't doing cost/benefit analysis, only looking at the benefits. The argument she is advancing also explicitly accepts the idea that dominant culture values and enterprises (such as war) are legitimate and laudable when embraced by women. And, again, I won't pause to argue. Jessica writes good, thought-provoking letters. The fact that I am not replying in depth is simply a reflection of my conclusion that it's not my rôle to participate in the definition of feminist theory and values....

Alexis A. Gilliland
4030 8th St. S.
Arlington, VA
22204

effective for feminism?".

Avedon Carol, possibly mindful of the Armenian experience with the Turks, says no. Jessica Salmonson, who appears to be saying yes, is actually talking about conventional wars, when a return to the *status quo ante* was conceivable, if not always possible. She might have answered differently if she had considered the status of women in Troy after the Greek conquest, or in Carthage after the Third Punic War, rather than Vandals, Romans, and Visigoths for whom no historic records exist. The evidence of Troy and Carthage supports the view of Suzy McKee Charnas, that post-holocaust women are likely to be chattel.

It might be useful to imagine the question being put to a survivor. By analogy, what would a Zionist survivor of Dachau reply to the question: "Was the holocaust cost effective for Zionism?"? The answer, if you got one, might observe that the state of Israel is not well liked and is probably not viable in the long run; that the survivors get no respect (Witness the American Nazi march in Skokie.); that revisionist historians are already denying that a "holocaust" ever happened; that much of Europe is now *Judenrein*; and that ancient Jewish communities throughout the Moslem world have been uprooted and displaced. Perhaps the question you should be asking is: "Would a holocaust work better for feminists?".

A suggested ground rule: it's not a holocaust unless at least half of the people in a society are killed by it. By that definition, Troy and Carthage qualify, but World War 2—no matter how much more destructive it was in absolute terms—does not. —Richard S. Russell

Terry Garey's piece on poetry ["The Per-snicketyness of Communication" in *Aurora* 19] touched my parody and pastiche nerve:

Dust
Autumn wind
The mean roads
Rural decay
A warrior
Strides
Survivor of an host destroyed
The Priestess
Robed in black
Stops him
"Do you want to see me
Save the world
With a single

Thought?"

The warrior smiles

Almost salutes

"Sorry ma'am...

I was looking

For the wasp

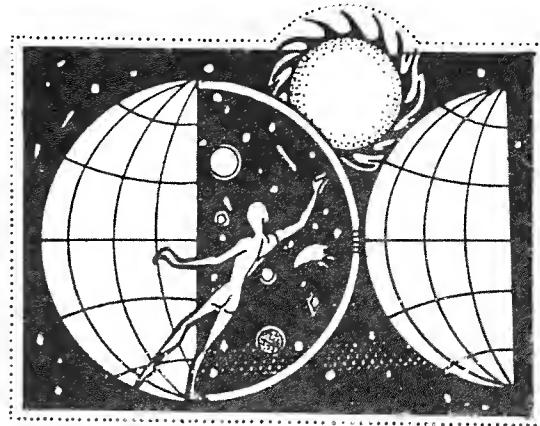
Waisted

Long blonde haired

Amazon

That deballed my horde."

[You forgot the Osterizer. —Terry A. Garey]



Georgie Schnobrich

The Art of Communication

Maureen P. Leshendok

12802 Ardennes Av.
Rockville, MD
20851

...I wanted to share
with you, and [Suzette
Haden] Elgin ["Teach
Yourself Alien", *Aurora*
19], a treasure of a

rare book* I found in the Cleveland Public Library. It is a translation of the poems of the sixth dalai lama, interesting in reference to Ms. Elgin's article because the translation is given exactly, then rewritten as idiomatic English. It gives an insight into the structure of Tibetan language that otherwise would require learning to read the alien (and, by now, slightly archaic) Tibetan of Tshaings-dbyangs-rgya-mtsho, who lived from 1683 to 1706. This is Number 26:

lovers bird stone road meet
mother wine seller united have been
troubles debts come into existence if
maintenance you should give
which is translated to mean:
Lovers who met each other by chance
Are united by mother the wine seller,
If troubles and debts should result from this,
You must take care of them.

The book is a three-way translation, from Tibetan into Chinese as well as English, with the Tibetan characters transcribed exactly, then retranscribed to the very different pronunciation, then to the meaning as illustrated above. The same is done into Chinese, for those of you who read Chinese....

*Tshaings-dbyangs-rgya-mtsho, *Love Songs of the Sixth Dalai Lama*, translated with notes and introduction by Yu Dawchyuan and transcribed by Jaw Yuanren (Beijing: Academia Sinica, 1930).

Archetypes and Stereotypes

Jessica Amanda Salmonson
2127 S. 254th Pl.
Kent, WA
98031

I think Cy
Chauvin [letters,
Aurora 19] missed
the boat somewhere.

I think [Samuel]

Delany may not have meant his judgment of *Left Hand of Darkness* ["an example of the 'doomed homosexual relationship' plot, which ends with one of the lovers dying"] literally, but there is no question but that the archetype's in [Ursula] Le Guin's book resemble to a huge degree the archetypes in many a "doomed homosexual relationship" novel. I've read enough of them to have realized, on hearing Delany's statement, that he had put his finger on something true enough. All it means is that Le Guin and numerous other writers draw from the same culture (this one) and that she shares many of the same prejudices and/or visions of authors of Doomed Homosexual Affair novelists. Cy's belief that any book is literally about aliens is stupid on his part. Every book is about us, to one degree or another. Genius that Le Guin may be, she is still part of this planet, with no videoscreen connecting her to some other. Really, it's quite bizarre how some SF readers believe they're reading about actual aliens. Or am I the only one who sees the absurdity of such notions as that? If Cy chances to read some of the novels Delany means, and gets it out of his head that SF books are about real aliens, perhaps he'll understand that Delany has produced the single most important insight into this classic novel to date. Not an absolute insight, but the most telling.

[Diane] Martin and [Jeanne] Gomoll's overview of Suzette Haden Elgin's work [in Aurora 19] should have made passing mention of the fact that the prolog to *At the Seventh Level* is really a separate short story from *Fantasy and Science Fiction*—one of the earliest wholeheartedly feminist SF pieces in a genre magazine, and, to date, the most evocative, heart-rending one. The rest of the book pales beside the importance of that one short story.

It is a curious fact, and one to which no one knows quite how much importance to attach, that something like 85% of all known worlds in the Galaxy, be they primitive or highly advanced, have invented a drink called jynnan tonnyx, or gee-N'N-T'N-ix, or jinond-o-nicks, or any one of a thousand or more variations on the same phonetic theme. The drinks themselves are not the same, and vary between the Sivilvian 'chinanto/mnigs' which is ordinary water served at slightly above room temperature, and the Gagrackan 'tzjin-anthony-ks' which kills cows at a hundred paces; and in fact the one common factor between all of them, beyond the fact that the names sound the same, is that they were all invented and named before the worlds concerned made contact with any other worlds.

What can be made of this fact? It exists in total isolation. As far as any theory of structural linguistics is concerned it is right off the graph, and yet it persists. Old structural linguists get very angry when young structural linguists go on about it. Young structural linguists get deeply excited about it and stay up late at night convinced that they are very close to something of profound importance, and end up becoming old structural linguists before their time, getting very angry with the young ones. Structural linguistics is a bitterly divided and unhappy discipline, and a large number of its practitioners spend too many nights drawing their problems in Quisghian Zodahs.

What I find intriguing about Elgin's work is that, despite the fact that her protagonist is a man, and he's a striking character, the reader comes away nonetheless remembering the women in these stories. Margaret St. Clair once remarked that, for years in this field, you could only have strong female characters in a short story. At novel length, you had to have a man at center stage, or the book just would never sell. She handled this by writing about couples and portraying the man and woman as relatively equally important. I wonder if Elgin didn't run up against a similar problem at the beginning of her writing SF, since her novels are rather extreme in the way the (female) "side characters" dominate the (male) "protagonist" in the reader's memory. I met one woman who remembered most of the plot of *Farthest* but didn't remember Coyote Jones was in it!

[I remembered him as being a woman!
—Diane Martin]

Blueprint for a Camel

Jerry Kaufman
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Seattle, WA
98112

...We all got our copies of Aurora. Someone (I think it was Eli Cohen.) glanced at the colophon and said, "I wonder which of them is the dictator. Someone has to make the final decision." 12 co-editors? (Or however many?)

[We have stumbled on an ancient, seldom used method for making decisions. It's called participatory democracy. We all sit down together and decide what needs to be done. If we can't agree on what or how something is to be done, we argue about it and then we vote. Majority wins. We seldom agree 100% on anything, but we all get our own way some of the time. This is apparently enough to keep us happy and working together. —Diane Martin]

[Rumble, rumble, rumble. Mutiny, mutiny, mutiny. —Stan Freberg]

WAHF

[We also heard from Mike DuCharme and Greg Rihn.]

FANZINE REVIEWS

JEANNE GOMOLL
DIANE MARTIN



Kratophany 13; edited by Eli Cohen (86-04 Grand Ave. #4D, Elmhurst, NY 11373); infrequent; available for the usual or \$1.50.

Eli opens this issue of *Kratophany* with a beautifully written and heartfelt memorial to his friend Susan Wood, who died in November of 1980. Most paragraphs of the memorial start out with a tribute to one of the many public events or accomplishments of Susan's life, and end with a personal memory that Eli associates with it from his long and close friendship with her. Also in the issue is a republished piece by Susan herself, a humorous, anecdotal account of a trip to New York City in the mid-1970s, called "The Wilds of New York". The article is a marvelous example of the witty, fannish writing that is associated with Susan Wood's career and with *Kratophany*. Though it's been almost two years since the last full-fledged issue (not counting *Kratophany* 12.5, sent out last year in the form of a few interim pages announcing Eli's move to New York from Vancouver), the zine is always worth the wait—if only for the chance that a Judy Mitchell comic strip or illustration might be included. Eli's fanzine is always full of light, well written fannish writing like Stu Shiffman's hilarious screenplay take-off on Hope-Crosby flicks, "Road to Fiawol", or like Eli's own NonCon guest-of-honor speech included in this issue, or his account of his arduous climb up the seemingly endless flights of stairs to the summit of St. Paul's Cathedral in London at worldcon last year. A word of warning about Eli's writing, though: here there be puns. "The Stairs My Destination", indeed!

Of special interest to word-processing fandom is the fact that this issue of *Kratophany* was produced entirely with an Exidy Word Processor Pac on a cassette-based Sorcerer microcomputer, a converted Selectric typing it onto stencils from the computer-edited text. This may be the beginning of a trend in fan publishing. [JG]

Pong; edited by Ted White (1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, VA 22046) and Dan Steffan (823 N. Wakefield St., Arlington, VA 22203); biweekly; available for the usual: letters of comment, fanzines in trade (to both of them), some stamps at the going rate, or \$5.00 per single issue.

Pong continues to be one of the most delightful fanzines to come out of the recent fannish renaissance, so far. Along with Dan Steffan's *Boonfark*, the Nielsen Haydens's *Telos*, Alan Bostick's now defunct *Fast and Loose*, Rich Coad's *Space Junk*, Cheryl Cline's *The Wretch Takes to Writing* (or whatever), Avedon Carol and Anne Laurie Logan's *Harlot*, and maybe a few more, these zines are the place to read the best fannish writing being done in the US today. *Pong* has an advantage over all those, however. *Pong* really and truly comes out regularly and frequently. (Since I committed myself to writing some fanzine reviews for this issue, I've already accumulated a stack of three *Pongs*.)

Each issue is small enough to be mailed with one 20¢ stamp and to be read cover-to-cover, first thing, within a half hour. And it's worth it, too. Both Ted White and Dan Steffan are excellent writers and Dan's 4-cm-square illustrations and decorated *Pong* logos make for wonderful layout. In recent issues, Dan has written the continuing saga of "Stalking the Wild Bergeron", a humorous fan-fiction piece about the elusive Richard Bergeron. There's also been the continuing lampooning of Martin Morse Wooster—which led to lively discussions of dorks, fanhistory, and fannish elitism. That discussion has now been terminated, but still alive is the never-ending flow of anecdotes and news items (Dan's recent marriage, Ted's hilarious account of Why He Skipped WorldCon this year, Claude Degler's reappearance in Indianapolis, and fanzine reviews by Ted.) [JG]



Georgie Schnobrich

Blatant 9; edited by Avedon Carol (4409 Woodfield Road, Kensington, MD 20795); irregular; available for the usual or \$1.50 per single issue.

Avedon has evidently found an affordable publishing outlet since her *The Invisible Fan* went under for want of a free Xerox connection. And a good thing too. Her writing skills and feminism make her a valuable asset to the fannish community, much too valuable to lose to apazine writing and university work. Luckily, Ted White apparently convinced her that she has a "mission" to do *Blatant*, for here she is doing another genzine (to come out when finances and energy permit) with Gilliland cartoons and the familiar Avedon Carol style. (Speaking of which, "blatant" describes her style with amusing neatness.) Avedon is frequently angry, enthusiastic, intensely interested, or scathingly sarcastic, but she is never boring.

In *Blatant* 9, she compares her parents' past attitudes toward her brother's taking-apart stage (involving TVs) with their less tolerant attitude toward her own taking-apart stage (involving Barbie dolls) and speculates on how that experience left indelible marks upon her mechanical aptitude. Avedon also talks a little bit about her "mission" to do *Blatant* and writes a DisClave report. A fanzine-review column by Ted White and a marvelous political commentary disguised as a film review ("Praising the Lord, Passing the Ammunition" by Helen Berrotini) fill out the issue. [JG]

Harlot 2; edited by Anne Laurie Logan (116 Burcham St., East Lansing, MI 48823) and Avedon Carol (4409 Woodfield Rd., Kensington, MD 20795); published by Ken Josenhans (116 Burcham St., East Lansing, MI 48823); irregular; available for the usual (one trade fanzine per editor).

This is the second issue of a fanzine

produced by long-distance collaboration by two skilled fan writers, and, given luck and perseverance by Ken Josenhans and his mimeograph machine, it will have a long, successful run. More than anything else, *Harlot* is a fannish publication—with only slight mention of science fiction and emphasis on anecdote and humor—but, given the level of political awareness of the two co-editors, this zine has a higher level of political commentary than is usual for fannish zines. For instance, Avedon Carol makes some derogatory comments on the new Moral Majority regime and proclaims fanzines a necessary asylum from that world. And Anne Laurie Logan figures out that Reagan, the new improved variety of racism, and poverty in the USA are variant forms of WASP humor.

But fannish writing of the more familiar variety is evident in Avedon's delightful worldcon report (That's last year's worldcon in Boston.), in which she reveals the results of her study of British fans and the strange things some of them do with broomsticks and the annual Jerry Pournelle-drunk-at-the-SFWA-suite-party show. Speaking of fannish contents, there is even something by someone named Jeanne Gomoll, called "Millennium Falcons, Ash Glaze, and Dignity". Also included in this issue is an excellent review by Avedon of Norman Spinrad's *A World Between*, expanded from a review in *A Women's APA*, and an article by Pat Mueller ("Anomie") on important life decisions, which is accompanied by a wonderful illustration by the author. [JG]

Weber Woman's Wrevenge 1; edited by Jean Weber (13 Myall St., O'Connor, ACT 2601, Australia); frequency (?); available for trade, contribution, letter of comment, A\$0.50, or US\$0.75.

One of the most unfortunate repercussions



Steven Fox

of the increased postal costs is the growing difficulty for fans to keep in touch across oceans (or even mere national barriers, as exist between the USA and Canada). *Aurora's* postage costs within the USA are a negligible part of our publication budget, primarily because we possess a non-profit, tax-exempt corporate status and can purchase the non-profit bulk-mailing permit. This does not help us at all, however, when it comes to mailing to Canada, Europe, or Australia. Thus, the number of overseas and Canadian fanzines we can afford to trade with is limited. One of the few we've recently added to our mailing list is *Weber Woman's Wrevenge*.

Jean Weber's writing style is enjoyable, and it's interesting to get a down-under perspective on events, fannish and otherwise. I'm very enthusiastic about her plans for future *WWWs*; serious and humorous comments on "human relationships...the way we live now—heterosexual, homosexual, monogamous, group, with or without children, and any combination or permutation". It will be interesting to maintain a link with an Australian feminist.

In *WWW* 1, Jean describes her recent North American return visit (As an expatriate American, she has lived in Australia since 1974.) and stops in San Francisco, Seattle, and Vancouver. She promises to pick up next time in Minneapolis. Of value to American faneds is a listing of Australian fanzine editors. [JG]

Diaspar 22, edited by Terry Carr (11037 Broadway Terrace, Oakland, CA 94611), irregular; available only by editorial whim.

Terry writes that "Many of my friends are writers—in fact, most of them are—and from time to time they've written things that are off the beaten track or whatever. When I read such things and think they're delightful but I can't publish them professionally, sometimes I'm able to arrange to publish them in this amateur magazine of long standing." The amateur magazine of long standing (22 issues) is *Diaspar*, and the collection of writing is indeed delightful.

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There is James Sackett's "The Curious Incident about Piltdown", which is so well written and so remarkably instructive about that infamous hoax-archeological find of the early 1900s that I almost didn't notice it turning into a Sherlock Holmes mystery story. The staff archeologist at the office where I work made a dozen Xeroxes of it and by now the whole of the Wisconsin Historical Society is probably giggling hysterically over the story. The footnotes are meticulously researched, I'm sure.

On a more serious note, there is Lois Metzger's "Passion", an eerie true-to-life short story about love and how the confusion between who we think we are and what other people think we are can lead to tragedy. I hope that Terry is wrong, and that someday this will see professional publication. It is a gem of a story.

And lastly there is some poetry by Melisa Michaels, some of it quite lovely, especially one that begins "Time has a way of changing things—". All headings and illustrations in *Diaspar* are by William Rotsler, and the effect is quite nice: simple and clean.

Pandora 8, subtitled "Role-Expanding Science Fiction and Fantasy"; edited by Lois Wickstrom (3721 Barcelona St., Tampa, FL 33609); quarterly; available for \$2.50 per single issue or \$6.00 per annual subscription.

Pandora is a fiction magazine, professionally printed with a full-color cover. The cover art is a beautiful abstract by Vance Kirkland ("Untitled Art from Burma, 1962") and interior art is mostly full-page black and whites of mixed quality. David' Sandoval's illustration for "The Painless Dream Detective" is excellent.

The stories in *Pandora* are not your typical "fan fiction". They are generally well written. A continuing feature is the "Only *Pandora* Can Print" section, which contains stories that because of the frankness of subject matter and/or non-traditional sex/gender roles would probably not be accepted in more professional markets. Contributors in the past have included professional writers such as Jaygee Carr, Janrae Frank, and Steve Barnes, as well as numerous talented amateurs.

Pandora is a competent, non-sexist alternative to some of the more distressingly status quo mass-market science-fiction magazine. [JG & DM]

The Looking Glass, Summer 1981; edited by Ben Fulves (25 Parkway, Montclair, NJ 07042); irregular; available for 50¢.

The pages of this issue of *The Looking Glass* are numbered 134-147; apparently it is part of a continuing effort, though no details are mentioned. While slim, it is packed with high-quality, serious material. Fulves discusses pay-TV and SF movies. He also takes a healthy crack at discussing the problems of environmental pollution resulting from improper disposal of hazardous waste. The latter is not a "faanish" topic; it has too much relevance to the real world. A most informative article. There's also poetry, and a horrible (in the sense of frightening) short story by Stephen Gresham.

For me, the high point of this issue were the fanzine reviews. Lee Smith provides us

with some of the most thorough and most useful reviews I've ever read. Picking three of the more serious and ambitious fanzines currently published (*Dark Fantasy*, *Pandora*, and *Space & Time*), Smith makes detailed comments on the various articles. He backs up his criticism with examples, both of problem areas and of how they could be improved. From my own limited experience, I know how difficult good editing can be, and found his textbook examples very educational. They are also, of course, very useful from a writer's point of view. [DM]

The Lonesome Node, Vol. 1 No. 1, 1981 Sep-Oct; edited by Suzette Haden Elgin (Ozark Center for Language Studies, Route 4, Box 192-E, Huntsville, AR 72740; bimonthly; \$2.00 per single issue or \$6.00 for annual subscription.

Maybe this isn't a fanzine—though it is mimeographed. To quote Page 1 Paragraph 2, "The Lonesome Node is the bimonthly newsletter of a very small, very non-profit research center, which is devoted to six areas of research: Women & Language; Ozark English; Language in Health Care; Religious Language;

Verbal Self-Defense; and Linguistics Materials for Children." The first six issues of *TLN* will take on the above topics in the given order. Future topics will be announced.

This premier issue offers a glossary of new words (or old words used in new ways) "for the expression of women's perceptions". Some examples:

Acanthophile: A woman who repeatedly chooses to form relationships with persons who abuse or neglect her, despite apparent unhappiness each time [from Gr. acanthos (thorn)].

Cutesipate: To trivialize the concerns of women by seeming to indulge them, "poking gentle fun" at them, etc.

There are also updates on the various other research areas, as well as information on a networking service available. *TLN* is an effective blend of serious academic subject matter with a distinctively—and refreshingly—non-academic tone. (Suzette Elgin will be a guest of honor at WisCon 6.) [DM]

THE SPHINX ICON (THE SECOND COMING)

Millea Kenin

She sleeps in the desert, purring softly,
claws tucked in velvet paws,
phoenix wings folded.
She sleeps in the moonlight—but not for long now.

Her hair lifts in the wind from the distant hills
She sniffs a message from her rising star:
her hour is coming round at last.

She stretches at tip of wing and claw,
dreaming the spiral of the law,
the double winding stair;
good times coming, born in blood.
Shall the glass towers tremble and shatter?
Shall the sea be swept clean?

Soon she will waken, born of herself again.
She will stride across the desert on heavy, tawny pads.
She will streak over the ocean on wings of flame.
When she comes to the crossroads of time
and confronts her brother—

What will she do?

You know:
she will ask a riddle
and you will have to find an answer.



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The History of every major Galactic Civilization tends to pass through three distinct and recognizable phases, those of Survival, Inquiry and Sophistication, otherwise known as the How, Why and Where phases.

For instance, the first phase is characterized by the question How can we eat? the second by the question Why do we eat? and the third by the question Where shall we have lunch?

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
by Douglas Adams

a review of The Clan of the Cave Bear



John Alexander

Debbie Notkin

The Clan of the Cave Bear, by Jean M. Auel (Bantam, 1981), 495 pages, \$3.75.

We know so little about the earliest history of human civilization that a novel about Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon people relies every bit as much on its author's imagination as any far-future history or tale set in an alien culture. Though archeologists have uncovered some evidence of the tool use, dwelling patterns, burial customs, etc. of our remote ancestors, all day-to-day interactive patterns, social structures and hierarchical arrangements are lost to us. An author choosing to write about these people starts with a tantalizingly sketchy canvas, which she can fill in much as she chooses.

Jean M. Auel obviously devoted a lot of time and thought to constructing the social patterns of the Neanderthal tribe which comprises all but one of the characters in *The Clan of the Cave Bear*. She is very careful to portray a consistent, well ordered society with a plausible level of technology and well defined individual characters. The amount of effort this required is laudable; the results are unfortunate. Auel has chosen to portray

the Neanderthal society as unswervingly, extraordinarily patriarchal and to emphasize the stratification in that society by introducing a non-tribal character who partakes of both women's and men's statuses: The outcome of this approach is that Neanderthal women and men are both trivialized in the shadow of this one outsider.

In Auel's Neanderthal clan, women have absolutely no control over their lives, their marriages, their sexual encounters, the fate of their children, or the decisions of the tribe. They do have a great deal of responsibility, all of it in areas which our own (Auel's) culture has traditionally labelled "women's work"—child rearing, cooking, storage of food, "keeping house" (such as it is in a cave). In general, women exist to bear children and to keep men's lives running as smoothly as possible. For example, each clan has a medicine woman who has certain covert powers to help herself and other women against male depredations; she also is necessary to certain male rituals because only she knows how to make the hallucinatory potions which they require. Nonetheless, she gains only in prestige, not power, and she is not freed from any of the more commonplace women's duties.

Auel stresses, again and again, that the Neanderthals operate almost totally by tradition and racial memory (which she postulates as a directly accessible tool of their race). Change is almost invisibly slow, and even the concept of change is both foreign and frightening to the clan. Thus, Iza, the medicine woman, would never think of withholding her knowledge from the men to force them to acquiesce to some need of hers; in fact, before the book begins, she lived for several years with a man who mistreated her badly (i.e. beat her much more than generally acceptable and cared nothing for her needs). Nothing prevented her from using her knowledge of poisons to kill him subtly, but she contented herself with subverting his desire for a child. (The Neanderthal notion of childbirth, as described by Auel, has nothing to do with copulation; they believe that a woman conceives when her totem loses to her husband's totem; the menstrual period is the "time when totems battle". Meanwhile, sexual access is general: any man may signal any woman at any time if he wishes to "relieve his needs". Nonetheless, medicine women have both birth-control and miscarriage-inducing lore.

There is no older fictional device than that of introducing an outsider into a culture in order to be able to examine the culture. Auel's form of this is to have the medicine woman adopt a badly injured 5-year-old Cro-Magnon child whom the clan finds while searching for a new dwelling cave. From the beginning, Ayla, the orphan, is different in every way from her new relations. She is, to their eyes, extremely ugly. She is also extraordinarily lucky, beginning with her discovery of a satisfactory cave after the tribe's leader has despaired of doing so. She does not speak their language (hand signals augmented with grunted speech), and she has trouble learning it until she realizes she must watch the hands, rather than just listen. She becomes the special favorite of the tribe's venerable and deformed wise man, Creb, and she astonishes him by grasping the concepts of number, counting, and the passage of time in a way no one else ever has. Creb is portrayed as far and away the brightest of his race, yet he finds himself outstripped in minutes by a 5-year-old child, and a girl at that.

Ayla's extraordinary abilities dominate the novel. She has trouble accepting the woman's subservient role from the beginning. She breaks previously unassailable taboos by secretly teaching herself to hunt. She learns the medicine lore of her adopted mother, using her remarkable quickness and retentive memory to compensate for her lack of racial memories. Her friend the magician, listening to the spirits, gives her a man's totem; he justifies this to himself by assuming that since no man will ever want to marry Ayla, it won't matter

...And so the problem remained; lots of the people were mean, and most of them were miserable, even the ones with digital watches. Many were increasingly of the opinion that they'd all made a big mistake in coming down from the trees in the first place. And some said that even the trees had been a bad move, and that no one should have left the oceans.

Man was a rough draft.

that her totem is too strong to be defeated by a man's. When she eventually does become pregnant, she fights obsessively to keep her child. Clearly, she is a man/woman—forced by accident of genetics into the female role in the tribe, but having both male and female skills, knowledge, and needs.

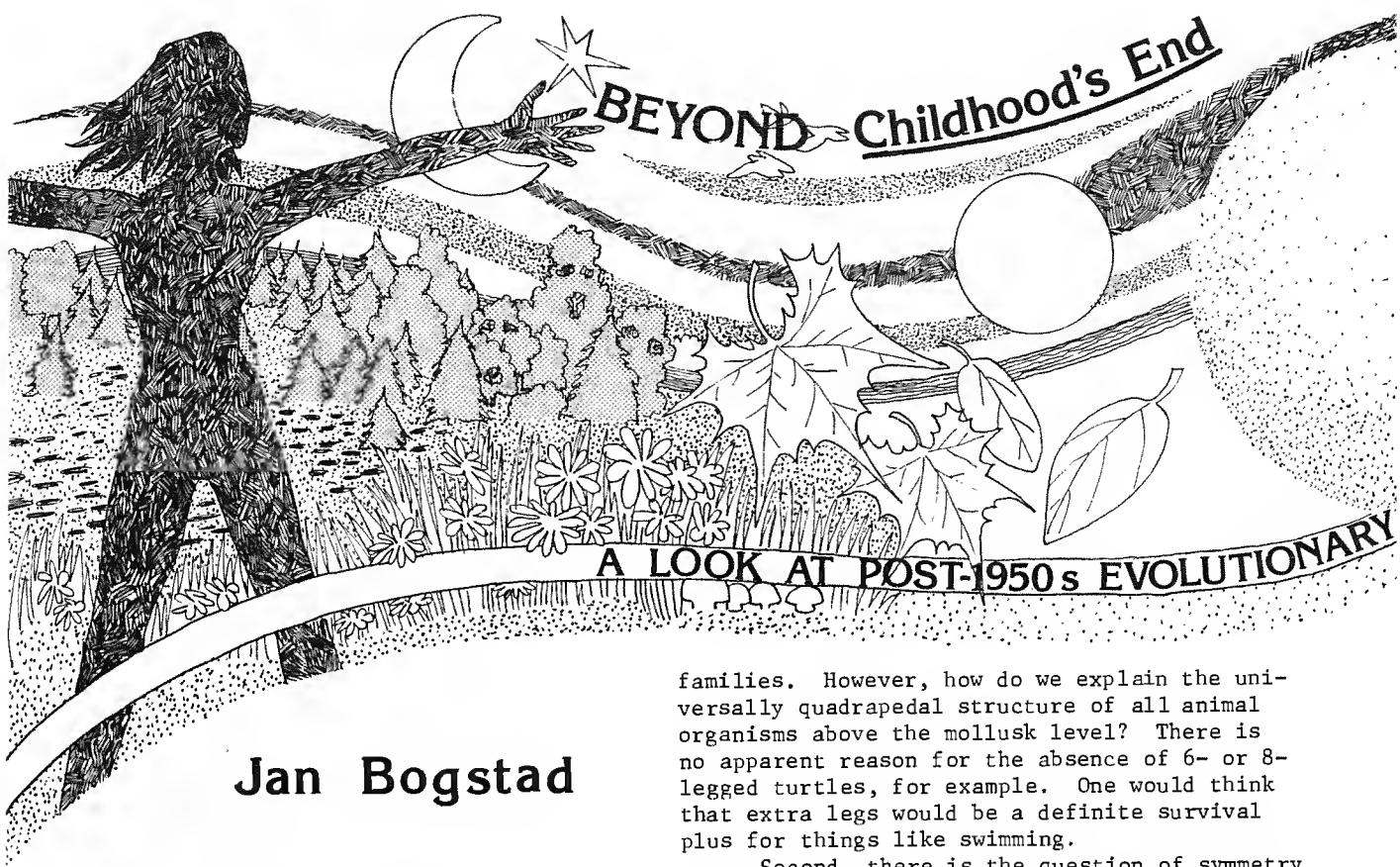
No challenge is beyond Ayla, except that of fully accepting her female limitations. Eventually, when she is forced to reveal her hunting skills to save a child's life, she is treated with much less severity for her unthinkable crime than would be predicted from tribal custom. Each time she gets into trouble for escaping the woman's role, the forms are observed with regard to her punishment, yet never is the outcome as severe as the punishment of a "real" woman would be.

Auel has, in effect, used contemporary racism as a model for the interaction between two species. Although it does not appear that Auel dislikes the Neanderthals, she certainly patronizes them, particularly in contrast with Ayla. The implication behind the entire book is that Ayla's forebrain makes her somehow better and certainly many times more capable, than her companions. She is capable of not only remarkable intellectual feats (some of them difficult for 20th Century children of her age) but also of much more complex ethical and philosophical judgments than the rest of the clan. It is particularly notable (and implausible) that she can recognize the casual sexual-access customs as rape and find them violating, even though she has never known any other way. In addition, she is able to deduce the relationship between sexual activity and conception, one which many human civilizations did not straighten out well into recorded history.

Since Auel's book is, of course, written for a contemporary rather than a prehistoric audience, we are justified in examining it for any message it may have for today. What we find, regrettably, is the word that a woman can surpass the limitations and subjugations placed upon her by a patriarchal society only by rejecting and surpassing her genetic heritage, by being something more than other women—and even other men. It is probable that Auel did not intend to make this judgment; nonetheless it is there. Books about perfect women are not feminist books: superwomen have abilities which do not percolate through to real women. The idealized woman, regardless of what she can achieve, has no ameliorating effect on the subjugation of women everywhere, since by being perfect she renounces the status of woman. Placing this prevalent 20th Century anti-feminist myth into a prehistoric setting merely gives it historical credibility, and Auel, by doing so, has done us all a disservice.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
by Douglas Adams

unknown



Jan Bogstad

Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End*, first published in 1950, was an early science-fiction attempt to speculate on the next step in human evolution, *à la* Darwinian sciences. It is also among the better known of a great number of works which postulate a close link between physical factors and social/psychological factors in looking at human evolution. This essay will concern itself with a number of works published since Clarke's notable speculation, looking at what science-fiction writers have done with Darwinian theories of evolution in the intervening 31 years.

The interplay between environment and organism which forms the core of evolutionary theory has always seemed to me remarkably inadequate when it comes to the question of how social and psychological factors contribute to the "survival of the fittest" aspect of evolution. Darwin's *Origin of Species*, taken as it was from his speculations after the voyages of the *Beagle*, seems to emphasize the ability of organisms to adapt their physical bodies over a period of generations, to various seemingly hostile and inhospitable environments. Yet this adaptation is only a partial explanation of the interaction of environment and organism. Survival of the fittest is wholly inadequate to explain the phenomenon of evolutionary adaptation for several reasons, some of them related more closely to the human than to other animals or plants.

First, there is the testy problem of defining the "fittest". This may seem to be a simple problem in the case of members of the animal kingdom, excluding humankind. Certainly animals with obvious infirmities or inappropriate features do not often survive to beget

families. However, how do we explain the universally quadrapedal structure of all animal organisms above the mollusk level? There is no apparent reason for the absence of 6- or 8-legged turtles, for example. One would think that extra legs would be a definite survival plus for things like swimming.

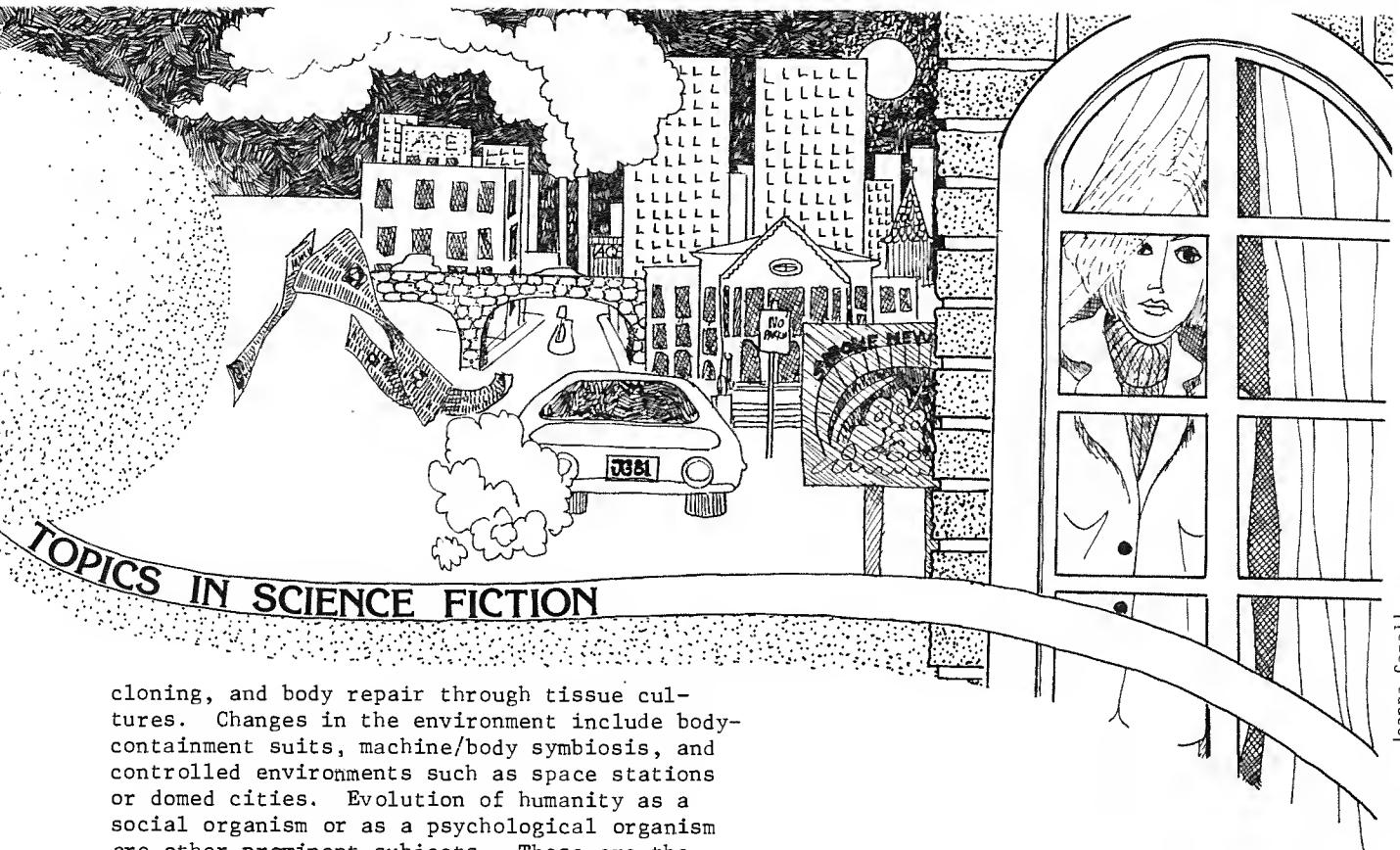
Second, there is the question of symmetry itself, a universal aspect of plant and animal structure on Earth (but a characteristic that Niven and Pournelle defied in *The Mote in God's Eye*).

Third, there is the question of limitations which undoubtedly exist to the adaptability of an Earth-bound organism. For example there are no mobile organisms (at least above the simple multicellular level) which survive in climates below or above specific temperature limits or without some access to water.

In the realm of human adaptability, the questions are even more complex and numerous. How much is social structure a basic factor in human survival? *Ishomo sapiens* really, as some sociologists assert, *homo socialus*? To what extent does intelligence make up for physical adaptability or physical imperfections, and which accidents of birth and genetics are "imperfections"?

From the questions outlined above, it can be seen that the theory of evolution based on survival of the fittest has inadequately accounted for the genesis of humans and human society in its present form. Science-fiction authors have been exploring the varying sides of this question, especially in evaluating effects of the relatively recent and well documented industrial revolution. Rarely do they deny evolution. Rather, they attempt to speculate, through a refinement of evolutionary theory, what the next stage of human development might be. These speculations fall into two general classes: humans either gain (1) more control over their bodies, or (2) more control over their environments.

Changes in the body include natural evolution, genetic or surgical alteration,



Jeanne Gomoll

TOPICS IN SCIENCE FICTION

cloning, and body repair through tissue cultures. Changes in the environment include body-containment suits, machine/body symbiosis, and controlled environments such as space stations or domed cities. Evolution of humanity as a social organism or as a psychological organism are other prominent subjects. These are the several categories into which to divide SF speculations on the future of *homo sapiens* as a species.

Several post-'50s SF narratives which concern themselves with the next step in human evolution concentrate, as did Clarke, on the mental development of humankind.

Change, by Anne Maxwell (Popular Library, 1975) is such a book. Although it is a flawed, early work of this author, *Change* is fascinating because it posits central conflict between a secret colony of people on another planet who have evolved with psionic powers, and an Earth power base which nurtures in its populace a hatred for these gifted individuals. The persecuted individuals, through their psionic abilities, join mentally with two alien races. One race, the Rynlon, has spaceflight and superior technology. The other race, the Changers, has the ability to join forces of individuals in a mental effort to control their collective enemies. Despite some unclarity in the plot, Maxwell's *Change* is interesting by virtue of a thesis that one section of the human race can separate from a less developed section in order to follow an evolutionary path which brings it closer to alien races, thus ensuring survival.

"The Persistence of Vision", a well known story by John Varley, is written in a truly dialectical fashion, but with an ending very similar to Clarke's. The 60 or so unplaced survivors of a 1964 rubella attack on their then-pregnant mothers decided, despite their deaf-blind state (indeed, in response to it), to design a more compatible living situation in the wastes of New Mexico. This is a speculation of how the human species can adapt the environment

to its needs, and how a social organism can be evolved in response to a physical need. A first-person account of life in the colony describes a couple of visits, in the 1990s, of a normal man with historical knowledge of their situation. Varley juxtaposes the physical "limitations" of these individuals and their children (most of them normal physically but living comfortably in very changed social circumstances) against the magnificent physical and mental accomplishments they achieve through their sense of community and interdependence. Varley's deaf-blind individuals come to represent, for his narrator and for their able-bodied children, the hope for a self-sufficient space-faring future human race. Quite a dialectical shift of fault into virtue.

Octavia E. Butler's Patternist series now includes four books (all originally published by Doubleday): *Mind of My Mind*, 1977; *Patternmaster*, 1976; *Survivor*, 1978; and *Wild Seed*, 1980. All are concerned with genetic and viral mutations as they affect the present and future of the entire human race. *Wild Seed*, printed last but chronologically first in the series, describes the beginnings of a one-man genetic project that extends well past the 20th Century. Through his manipulations, an amoral "spirit walker" named Doro develops a super-race capable of helping him to control the rest of humanity.

The social implications of evolutionary adaptations play a large part in Butler's plots. Doro has a plan for how he will use the end-product of his genetic project; however, the invasion of destructive viruses from outer space, along with the superior powers of one of his offspring, send his project awry. Inherent physical

interdependence between the members of his super-race force them to stay on Earth when the rest of humanity is able to escape to the stars. As long as they are Earth-bound, they retain their ability to affect and control the lives of all other, normal humans, but non-Earth environments render their superior mental abilities useless. Here we see a series based on the interaction between environment and organism, where the organism's mental abilities are a significant factor, first for survival, then for non-survival.

The environment which an organism inhabits can be as large as a planet or as small as a survival suit. This latter environment is the main feature of several interesting SF novels of the recent past. For example, Barington J. Bayley's *The Garments of Caean* (DAW, 1979) is an unlikely conglomeration of permutations on the old adage that "The clothes make the man." It is primarily concerned with an intergalactic theft of some unusual clothes, in particular a suit made of cloth with magical properties. This suit is supposed to transform the wearer into a success at whatever calling he or she chooses. (It has truly frightening side effects on the wearer's ego, however.) The novel contains several variations on this idea, including the creation of a human-seeming organism made up of a colony of flies. The most interesting of these concerns a race of humans which have created a machine/human symbiosis so perfect that it has become a part of their basic identity: "The Sovyans clearly demonstrate that the normal body image, the image that exists in the mind for personal and species identity, can be overlaid with an alterative image." [P. 169] Sovyans, embedded from birth in machine-environments which feed, clothe, and transport them, are incapable of thinking of their identities as organic organisms. They have created a society with no memory of it. I wonder what Freud would have said about one's oedipal attractions to a total-environment suit. Could such a perfect machine/human symbiosis be considered a survival adaptation?

M. K. Wren, in her series of family-saga books called the Phoenix Legacy (*Blood of the Lamb*, *Shadow of the Swan*, and *House of the Wolf*, all 1981, all Berkley), creates a similar total-environment suit, this time in the form of an organism which surrounds the human host both inside and out, making it possible for the host to survive in a variety of hostile environments, including space. Similar adaptations occur in *Stardance*, by Spider and Jeanne Robinson, wherein the main character is able to execute her fantastic dance-communications in orbital freefall.

The desire to be invulnerable is one of the basic forces behind the human ability to adapt to increasingly wider ranges of environmental conditions, but most of these sorts of stories involve a change in technology, not in the basic human organism. However, there are several sorts of SF narratives which concern themselves with adaptations of the human organism which will allow it to deal with different environments, through either simple or radical changes of the human body. Some of these also

deal with the social implications of the availability of clones, cloned organs, or radical body change.

In many ways, Pamela Sargent's early novel *Cloned Lives* (Fawcett, 1977) is the archetypical speculation on the social and psychological factors surrounding the possibility of human cloning. Not only does she follow the psychological development of five clones who are the first of their kind as they grow to maturity and deal with their differences from normal humans, but also she deals with the effects of this capacity on 20th Century social structures. As some of the characters are discussing what it might mean to be able to clone cells and organs so that a person would not have to age, one mentions:

"He's talking about something that would change us forever, that would dislocate our entire society [which by this time has become a world-society with space travel]. This won't be so easy for people to brush aside or suppress. If people get the idea that they might be able to live indefinitely, if it works, how is it going to be handled? Who's going to choose?" [P. 207.]

It is clear that what's at stake here is the social organism. How will the vast majority of humans react to the knowledge that they may be able to increase control of their bodies? Another important side-effect of the ability to prolong life through cloning is also brought out:

"We must all die some day to make room for those who will be better adapted than we are. That is the way evolution proceeds. No amount of genetic manipulation will produce unforeseen and spontaneous mutations possessing qualities humanity may need in the future." [P. 217]

The effects of the existence of clones on the evolution of the human race, as well as the psychological effects being a clone might have on individuals, are oft-handled SF topics. Examples include Kate Wilhelm's often lyrical and introspective *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* (Harper and Row, 1976) and Evelyn Leif's *Clone Wars* (Pocket Books, 1980). The latter book concentrates on the identity crisis of a female clone who is working towards granting clones full human status. Marta Randall's *Dangerous Games* (Pocket Books, 1980) and *Journey* (Pocket Books, 1978), while not primarily about clones, deal with genetic research as an ethical question. The French author, Pierre Barbet, makes use of the concept of cloning to provide an alien race with capable soldiers to help it stand off another alien race, thus ensuring species survival, in *The Napoleons of Eridanus* (translated for DAW books in 1976). The response of one of the five clones, who as an adult has championed the cause of genetic research, is "And why can't we improve ourselves?". In a few short conversations Sargent has summed up the arguments for and against not only cloning and genetic manipulation but also most medical research.

There are, of course, the spectacular clones in Varley's *Ophiuchi Hotline* (Quantum, 1977). This book plays with the question of sequential

memory of clone-sisters and their parallel developments. In Vonda McIntyre's *Dreamsnake* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1978), techniques of genetic manipulation and artificial insemination are set against a post-holocaust society where advanced technology does not exist to stand between the human organism and the natural environment.

All these books include similar themes: How will increased control of our genetic make-up change our social and psychological structures? How will we decide what survival characteristics make up the "best" individual for all time? How will we handle the question of who to preserve? How will we ensure, without the randomness inherent in heterosexual reproduction, that the human species continues to evolve in response to its environment?

Ensuring longer life to the few, as in stories such as Thomas Disch's recent "The Pressure of Time" (*Triquarterly*, Fall 1980), or Sargent's *Cloned Lives*, is an ethical question which has led SF writers to deal with biological solutions to the age-old problems of being human. The stories listed above all deal with clones and genetic manipulation as one answer to that question. Other authors have concerned themselves with the effects that improved surgical techniques and improved human-computer links will have on the future of humanity.

Sargent's *Cloned Lives* can be placed at the initiating point in a continuum of speculations on social and psychological effects of greater control over one's body. She speculates about the beginning of the process of social change that would inevitably accompany such bio-technical marvels as cloned humans and interchangeable bodies and body parts. Works such as Tanith Lee's *Electric Forest* (DAW, 1979) are also at this point in the speculative continuum, with characters asking, within the context of their particular worlds, what it will mean to the individual and the society if people are able to change bodies.

Several other notable works stand at the other end of this continuum, showing us how greater biological control will be integrated into a total social network. Narratives such as Michael Bischoff's *Star Fall* (Berkley, 1980), Lee's *Drinking Sapphire Wine* (DAW, 1977) and *Don't Bite the Sun* (DAW, 1976), Samuel Delany's *Babel 17* (Ace, 1976) and *Triton* (Bantam, 1976), Joanna Russ's "Nobody's Home" and, in a truly chilling fashion, Vonda McIntyre's "Elfleda", and Juleen Brauntingham's "The Satyr's and Dryads' Cotillion" (both in *New Dimensions* 12, Pocket-Timescape, 1981) reinforce a separation between body and spirit. They represent the radical changes that "this too, too solid flesh" can undergo without (appreciably) affecting the person which it encloses. McIntyre's "Aztecs" (*Fireflood and Other Stories*, Pocket-Timescape, 1979), represents a body change as integral to a personality change, another common SF theme.

What these works mentioned above have in common is that they show the individual as not at the mercy of its birth-given physical being. The most often-represented permutation of this bio-control is the ability to change bodies at will, one which often is seen to accompany easy



access to new organs, body parts, and body-forming techniques. Delany in *Triton*, Lee in *Don't Bite the Sun* and *Drinking Sapphire Wine*, and Bischoff in *Star Fall* deal with the implications of body-switching, where individuals are allowed to change their body-type and sex, and hence their life styles. For Delany's and Lee's characters, these body changes do not seem to be accompanied by an appreciable change in character.

Lee's "jang" culture is far enough in the future so that perpetual life, through the elaborate techniques of genetic and biological manipulation, is an accepted fact. Her two novels represent the old theme of the flaw in utopia, the flaw being the destruction of the nuclear family. Though her characters change sex and identity throughout the book, kill themselves only to be resurrected*, and have seemingly every advantage of advanced culture available to them, they reject the fast-moving, pleasure-oriented culture available to them. Her argument seems to be that human beings cannot change enough to incorporate the radical differences that all of these biological identity choices offer.

Delany's *Triton* represents an individual in crisis. His Bran cannot seem to adjust to life on the moon Triton, because he cannot fit himself into any of the myriad social environments available to him. In a culture where great strides have been made in the biological sciences, Bran's psychological makeup reflects, more than anything else, the limitations of the human condition, beset as it is with the fact of existential angst.

Bischoff makes quite another argument. *Star Fall* (Berkley, 1980) concerns a colorless young man's bid for freedom. At age 20, Todd Spigot changes his lumpy, unattractive body for that of an attractive, tall-dark-and-handsome

* "My friend Hergel had killed himself again. This was the fortieth time he had crashed his bird-plane on the Seefahr Monument and had to have a new body made..." (P. 9.)

specimen. Both Todd and the temporary inhabitant of his discarded body (the assassin, Philip Amber) resume their original bodies having been changed by the experiences with and in their altered forms. Bischoff does not maintain the mind/identity:body/vessel dichotomy that one finds at the basis of Lee's and Delany's narratives. These narratives represent two different consequences of the developing human ability to control biological limitations, consequences which imply assumptions about the structure of basic human nature.

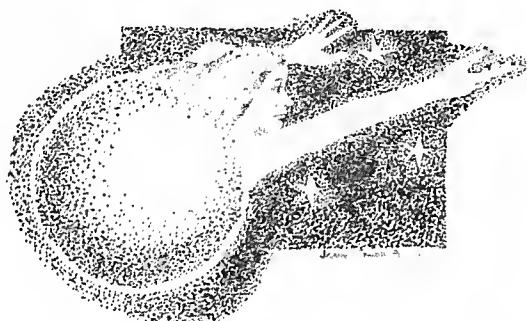
One interesting assumption of many recent SF narratives, which is well expressed in Delany's *Nova* and *Babel-17*, is the long-expected direct link between human and computer minds through direct plugs into the human nervous system. Whether this speculated evolutionary development will ever become a practical reality can be called into question. However, the efficacy of such a development as a metaphor for the expansion of human consciousness and control over the input of the human environment, also reflected in McIntyre's *The Exile Waiting* (Fawcett, 1975), cannot be denied. In this case, Delany and other writers assume that the human mind can orient itself to process a great deal more incoming information than it presently does, a definite positive comment on its creative power.

I have not really dealt with evolutionary trends which SF authors have speculated as arises

ing from responses to the environment, such as the male/female humans of Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* (Ace, 1969) or the short, squat humans evolved on planets with greater-than-Earth gravity, or the tall, slender humans on lighter-than-Earth-gravity planets, nor such radical responses to non-Earth environments as Blish describes in *Seedling Stars* (Gnome, 1957). Neither have I discussed the various human/alien cross-bred beings such as are at the initial moment of Bradley's *Darkover* series. These, though legitimate evolutionary speculations, will have to wait for another article.

I would not want to assert that SF authors have taken up the story of evolution where Darwin left it off. This would be too strong a statement of my thesis: that SF authors have engaged in a spectrum of speculations on the social and psychological factors as they might affect the evolution of the human species, given various technological and scientific developments which can be predicted. Whether increased control over our physical environment will lead us to the (sometimes chillingly) self-sufficient and active culture of Russ's "Nobody's Home", or the genetic gehenna of McIntyre's "Elfleda" or Brugtingham's "Satyr's and Dryads' Cotillion", it is comforting to note that these ethical aspects of technological factors in human evolution are now being considered by some of our best SF authors. At least we'll be prepared.

EXPERIMENT



Jeanne Gomoll

Terry A. Garey

cell walls break
DNA prisoners are on the lam
sprinkling characteristics
like loot

my body is like wildfire
dancing in the night
leaping forward
to the stars

only a woman, they said
would care to take the chance
only a woman, I said
would need to

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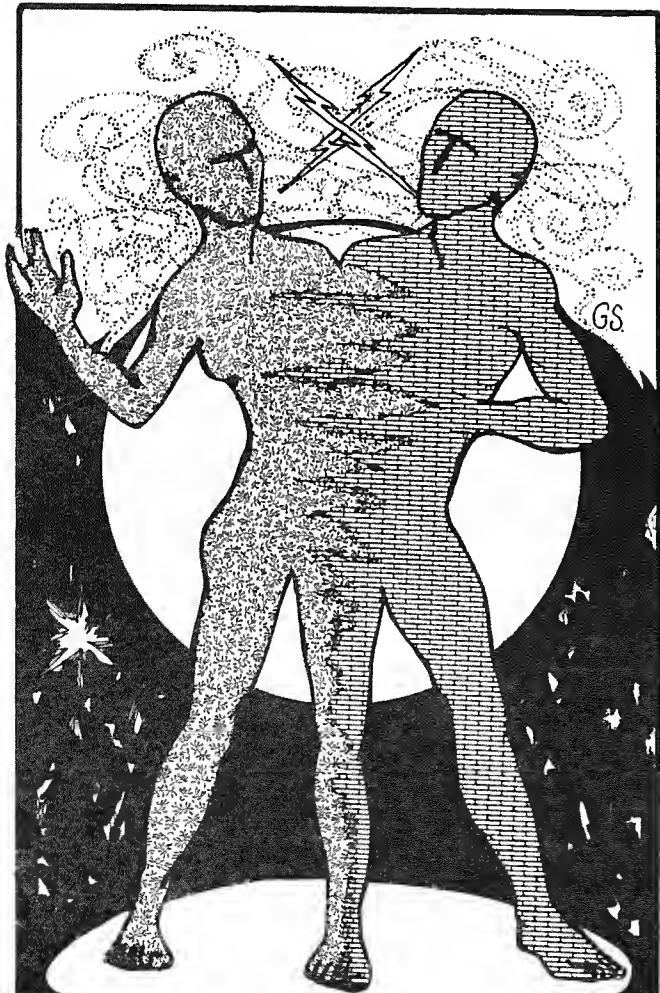
Far back in the mists of ancient time, in the great and glorious days of the former Galactic Empire, life was wild, rich and largely tax free.

Mighty starships plied their way between exotic suns, seeking adventure and reward among the furthest reaches of Galactic space. In those days spirits were brave, the stakes were high, men were real men, women were real women and small furry creatures from Alpha Centauri were real small furry creatures from Alpha Centauri. And all dared to brave unknown terrors, to do mighty deeds, to boldly split infinitives that no man had split before—and thus was the Empire forged.

Many men of course became extremely rich, but this was perfectly natural and nothing to be ashamed of because no one was really poor—at least no one worth speaking of. And for all the richest and most successful merchants life inevitably became rather dull and niggly, and they began to imagine that this was therefore the fault of the worlds they'd settled on. None of them was entirely satisfactory: either the climate wasn't quite right in the later part of the afternoon, or the day was half an hour too long, or the sea was exactly the wrong shade of pink.

And thus were created the conditions for a staggering new form of specialist industry: custom-made luxury planet building.

Androgynous Futures



George Avedon

Avedon Carol

A few years back, George F. Gilder made his name writing anti-feminist books. An example is *The Naked Nomads: Unmarried Men in America* (1974). His books promoted the theory that women must remain in the mothering/nurturing role in order to use their softening influence on men, who are naturally violent and irrational and can only be coerced or seduced into showing civilized behavior by women who charm, bribe, and mother them into it. Gilder believes that the sole motivation for males to work, create, and perhaps even think is "to impress some woman". So if a male works, it's to get or keep a wife, who will have sex with him and make his dinner and maybe even let him play with his own offspring once in a while. It is only to maintain that good old-fashioned traditional relationship with women that men even make a pretense of keeping the peace, effecting legal and social justice, making the streets safe to traverse, understanding physics and mathematics and biology. Men, according to Gilder, apparently are lacking in any social conscience or intellectual/scientific curiosity. Thus, sex and reproduction (as well as feminine nurturance, I suppose) are their only real motivation to do anything.

Given the opportunity to confront him, I would point out to Gilder that, since whatever "civilizing influence" women may have has so far been quite ineffective in stopping wars and making the streets safe, his formula may have a flaw in it. For the sake of argument, though, I might concede that his questionable analysis of human biology/sociology, with its attendant unflattering description of men, is correct. In that circumstance, I think it's only fair to ask the question: if men are naturally violent and irrational and irresponsible, and women are obviously unequipped to handle them, what measures must be taken to neutralize this male violence and make the world safe for women and children (and for those odd males who are not so violent)?

As a feminist, I operate on the belief that the present situation is intolerable and potentially fatal to the human race. If, as Gilder maintains, the present situation is a "natural" one, and men cannot be civilized without perpetual vigilance, sacrifice, and servitude on the part of women, then it seems clear that the "natural" situation must be altered. If that means drugging men into passivity, or keeping them in cages, or surgically altering them (or chemically changing their hormones) so that they can't be so violent (and are "more like us"?), then I'm sure you will find those willing to support that viewpoint. Given that one sex must be oppressed in order to maintain the human race, I see no reason why males should be free from oppression and women should be the ones that should have to suffer.

But wait—are we really to believe that males are as stupid and selfish and short-sighted as Gilder says they are? Do we have any evidence to support that point of view?

Well, no. As a matter of fact, we have evidence to the contrary. Money and Sherfey established over 10 years ago that if you raise a male child to think himself female, he will act just the way other females around him do. That seems to make it clear enough that it isn't those old hormones that are doing the job. Whatever it is that makes men and women behave differently from each other doesn't seem to go very deep, physiologically speaking.

All of which would seem to imply that there is a lot to be said for the "nurture" side of the nurture-*vs*-nature argument. And, in that case, we ought to be thinking in terms of the socialization of our young to more flexible and egalitarian identities. Again, we are faced with the problem of what this means—whether we simply structure the kind of society we want and hope that our children will learn from our example, or get ourselves mired in some sort of Skinnerian nightmare. I think that freedom of choice offers more potential than behavior modification, but there are questions we must all sort out before taking any actual steps—for example, just where is the line drawn between "teaching our kids our values" and putting them in the Skinner Box?

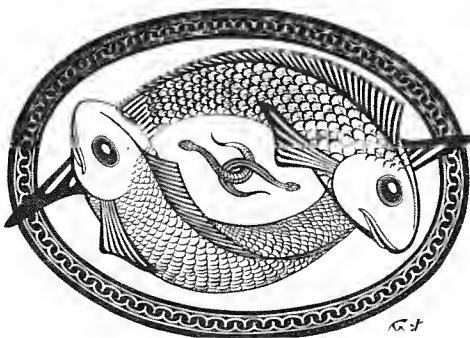
In *Tales of Neveryon*, Samuel R. Delany pointed up another viewpoint on the sex dualism—the view that one sex is a deformed or crippled version of the other. Avoiding the trite and uninteresting redundancy of simply using the old Adam and Eve story from *The Bible* and holding it up to ridicule, he writes his own creation myth in which the male is the damaged edition of the female (which, to our own androcentric conditioning, is a lot more obviously absurd) and then says, in essence, "That's wrong—you can't say that just because the two sexes are different, one is a damaged or inferior version of the other".

But far too many superficially enlightened people do take the view that one sex is a bad copy of the other—that either women are the crippled version (forced to carry children, lesser body-weight and strength, less competent gross-motor co-ordination, lacking a penis, etc.), or that men are the ones who were short-changed by nature (unable to bear their own offspring and know them as their own, poorer endurance and fine-motor co-ordination, gonads outside the body and vulnerable to attack, etc.). And if any of the people who perceive one sex as an inferior/damaged version of the other are on the planning committee for the new androgynous technocracy, we could find (as with the Gilder model) that they believe the "inferior" sex needs to be re-designed. Men might be given wombs, or women deprived of them; males might be kept undernourished and physically untrained and restrained, or females might be chemically or surgically beefed up. Or, there's always Sturgeon's *Venus Plus X* model, where males and females have surgery early in life to make them hermaphrodites, each having two sets of reproductive organs, one from each sex. Equality, yes, but...

The price of freedom may indeed turn out to be one we are not willing to pay, but before we start giving away the things we'd rather keep, let's make sure we aren't being overcharged. It may be that we don't need all of this fancy technology to buy us our desired freedom. If males and females, for all our differences (and we still don't know for sure just what the extent of those differences really is), are really of equal value, with neither one a deformed or incomplete version of the other (or an incomplete half of a full human being), then it isn't the people who need re-designing—it's the society as a whole that needs work, and that can't just be done with wires and chemicals and chips and buttons and knobs.

FISH STORY

Karol Lee Henderson



J. J. Marrs

From the great, wide ocean
Comes one
Swimming suddenly to another
Arms, fins, eyes, other
Combine in two
Spiralling faster inward
Till suddenly each to the other
Shark/victim
Temptress/prey
Tender minnows in finful ecstasy

Swish! with a flip of the tail
The peak of the nadir
Finds these two
Revealed as one,
But none shall know the truth.
There are no rules
In the sea of eternity.
Each self's experience
Reflected in a million eyes
Is thus undescribable
By one.

Evo-Systems

Patty Lucas



Joe Pearson

Why did sexism happen? In the past 15 years, feminists have made definite progress in figuring out how sexism works, but why it exists is still a wide-open question. The relationship of evolution to sexism and feminism can be thought of as the ultimate area of research and theorizing for the feminist movement. There are several fine books around to spur our interest—*Woman's Evolution: from Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family* by Evelyn Reed (1975), *The Descent of Woman* by Elaine Morgan (1972), *Eve's Rib: a Revolutionary New View of the Female* by Mariette Nowak (1980), and *Woman's Creation: Sexual Evolution and the Shaping of Society* by Elizabeth Fisher (1979), and many others. These examples of feminist-oriented anthropological research are guaranteed to catch the

imagination.

In speculating on human evolution and sexism, it is essential to have an idea of the time scales involved. *Homo sapiens* has been around for, at the very least, one million years. The advent of civilization, with agriculture and permanent settlements, occurred about 10,000 years ago. This means that civilization has occupied only 1% of our time on Earth. The hunter-gatherer period occupied the first 99%. And, if you wanted to take into account our earliest hominid ancestors, who appeared about five million years ago, civilization would occupy an even tinier portion of our lifeline.

Today *homo sapiens* dominates the earth; we have absolutely no competitors. Of all the primates that have ever lived, we are the spe-

cies that made it to the top. It may never be exactly clear what circumstances allowed us to pull away from the rest. However, it's reasonable to assume that a successful species will be well adapted not only to its physical environment, but also to its social environment. Self-destructive intra-species behaviors should have been weeded out during the millions of years of evolution.

Now *homo sapiens* is a successful species, its civilizations encompassing the globe. And yet a major feature of all of those civilizations has been sexism, of the male/superior-female/inferior variety. In such a successful species, how can this discontinuity exist? If the sexes got along as badly a million years ago as they do now, why didn't we all just take off in different directions and put our species out of its misery? Sexism, inasmuch as it makes people miserable, is as much an evolutionary handicap as allergies or near-sightedness.

There are, of course, people who take the opposite view, saying that male supremacy is a prerequisite for evolutionary success. One such person is Donald Symons, a professor of anthropology at the University of California in Santa Barbara. In his unremittingly depressing book *The Evolution of Human Sexuality* (1979) one of the male-dominance concepts that he advocates is that the species that will prosper—that is, leave the most progeny—will do so at the expense of the females. Violent subjugation of and forced mating with females (beautiful submissive females, that is) will produce more young. According to this theory, *homo sapiens* should be a contented species of aggressive men and passive slave-women, since any proto-feminists would have been bred out long ago. Obviously there is a flaw here—the likelihood that feminists of modern times are all mutants who just happened to appear at this particular instant is rather small. Nevertheless, Symons' type of faulty reasoning fits right into the wave of regressionist thinking that is sweeping our country, and it will take a lot of painstaking scholarship to discredit it. The tone of this particular book is very objective and "scientific", it has the sort of academic neutrality that (non-religious) conservatives will pick up on to support their political and economic aims. Whether Donald Symons concurs or not, his work, with its total disregard for the balance between individualism and social cooperation, will eventually end up supporting one of the worst aspects of Social Dar-

winism: the assumption that prevalent behavior is natural and therefore moral. As thinking beings, we should know better.

This article will divide our existence into three periods: our hominid days (about five million to one million years ago), our hunter-gatherer days (the last million years, constituting 99% of the existence of *homo sapiens*), and our civilized days (the last 10,000 years or 1%). Each period will be discussed in light of the number and types of jobs* it fostered.

It will be shown that, in evolutionary terms, both sexism and civilization are very recent developments. And both are attributable to a new phase in the development of *homo sapiens*, where physical evolution has been replaced by social change. Instead of letting our environment change us over thousands and millions of years, we can now change our environment(s) with incredible speed. The simple social structures of our hominid and hunter-gatherer days have proved themselves inadequate for the more complex civilizations we've developed. Using a trial-and-error method toward developing new social structures, sexism can be seen as an "error" that has been tried, found wanting, and will eventually be discarded.

* * *

In our hominid days there were only two sexually determined jobs, each having a two-fold purpose. The female job was childbearing and raising, and the male job was fighting and protecting: they were equally hazardous. It was very practical to divvy jobs up this way. Females have wombs—site of continuance of the species—they are not expendable. Any species that sent its pregnant females out to fight wild boars, while the males escaped to safety, wouldn't make it to first base. Females are physically built for endurance in the face of adversity; they can escape and wait out the adversity. Males, with their greater muscle mass, are built for immediate powerful action; they can battle the adversity. The whole idea is to save as many females with their young as possible. "Women and children first" is one of those hoary old cliches that has a good reason for existing. However, the cliche that females are "inferior" and males are "superior" with respect to these jobs is subjective nonsense. The two jobs are complementary, both are absolutely vital to the survival of the species.

*I will use the word "job" instead of "role" to denote any function of survival. For example, instead of childraising roles, I will speak of childraising jobs, etc. It is customary to use the word "role" in anthropological discussions of our ancestors or present-day "primitive" peoples while we use the word "job" in reference to our own modern societies. (We don't role-hunt, we job-hunt.) Using the word "job" in both cases links the ancient and modern in a continuum of human activities/functions. In order to discern the differences between ancient and modern behaviors one must start from the same definitions. Choosing "job" over "role" simply puts a fresh perspective on the situation and may inspire a feeling of kinship toward our hominid ancestors.



Brian Giza
Brian Giza

Concerning the two-fold nature of these jobs: with the evolution of large brains, primates (This means you.) could acquire and store larger amounts of extra-genetic information. The fact that primates are very social animals facilitates social learning. If raised in isolation, they would simply not learn all the how-tos of survival that normally-socialized primates would. Now childbearing is not learned, but childraising is. It is extra-genetic knowledge: the mother teaches her infant how to survive, and she probably learned how to teach and nurture from watching her mother raising her younger siblings.

The male impulse to divert, bluff, or fight a predator is only one aspect of male aggression. Male chimpanzees and gorillas also have dominance hierarchies amongst themselves (although pretty easy-going and fluid ones). The purpose of these hierarchies is not to pass on the genes of the biggest and strongest, because females of both species mate with any and all males. The dominant males are often first, but certainly not the only ones. (Rape is non-existent.) Examining the attributes of a dominant male might point to another purpose for these hierarchies.

Among baboons, male dominance is attained by brute force; they are violent creatures and the most vicious will be dominant. However, among chimpanzees and gorillas (easily our closest relatives), dominance is attained by performing the wildest most impressive display. The message is "Look at me! Look what I can do!", not, "If you cross this line I'll rip your ears off". While strength is one factor, inventiveness is the deciding factor; whoever can figure out the most awe-inspiring display wins the dominance game. Perhaps the strivings of the dominance hierarchy are a male contribution to extra-genetic social learning. A really effective display could scare off or trick that wild boar. Females also display on occasion, but it is much more effective for them to transmit extra-genetic information via teaching and caring for their young. A social arrangement that favors curiosity and inventiveness would be much more likely to result in intelligent, creative creatures (us) than a social arrangement that favors only brute strength and extreme repressive violence.

In fact, why do anthropologists compare human males with baboons so often anyway? It would be so much more pertinent to draw parallels between humans and gorillas or chimpanzees. One suspects a little manipulative anthropomorphism: mighty-hunter with harem-of-submissive-women complexes. At any rate, it is a wise idea to take the inevitable male chauvinism of traditional anthropology with a grain of salt. As an example you may have noticed that traditional anthropologists have created a lot of confusion between submissive gestures among animals and the female position in copulation (that is, female back to male front). Ethnologists in general tend to think that whoever is on top is dominant; therefore, whatever position the female takes will be, by definition, "submissive". What baloney. Animals copulate in whatever fashion is easiest for them. In fact, among gorillas, the female is actually on top because she is sitting in the male's lap! Among all apes, females initiate sex at least half the time.

The submissive gesture is a whole different story. Such a gesture says "Don't hurt me.

See how harmless I am?". The ultimate way of showing one's harmlessness is to take a vulnerable position. Holding out an open palm-up hand is making one's hand vulnerable. Turning one's back, or eyes, or crouching down are also demonstrations of vulnerability and harmlessness. The female copulatory position would certainly apply as one (of the many) vulnerable positions that primates take when confronted with an attacker. However it doesn't logically follow that in the act of copulation females are begging for mercy.

* * *

What were we like as hunter-gatherers? Since this was a fairly long period (+990,000 years) it seems reasonable that hunting and gathering developed (socially, not biologically) as logical and peaceful extensions of the original two sexually determined jobs. Among primitive peoples today, the men hunt and the women gather. Men make hunting implements and women make gathering and cooking implements. And everywhere we find the vestiges of matrilineal social organization.

Hunting is a very chancy business. Both gorillas and chimpanzee males hunt and kill small animals, and share the meat (sparingly) with other members of their troupe. However, this is anything but an everyday occurrence. Such an event usually happens only when a rare opportunity arises, like finding a lone baby bush-pig separated from its mother. With beginnings like this, it must have taken a long time to evolve hunting techniques that could guarantee a steady flow of meat for the home fires. Meat protein was undoubtedly a beneficial addition to our diets, but, in fact, it probably never replaced vegetable foods as a staple.

While the men were pursuing the chancy hunt, they must have been ultimately dependent on the vegetable staples that were being gathered by the women. Women, with children to raise and care for, of necessity would have turned to the more reliable gathering of vegetable foods for their families. You couldn't expect the next generation to continue healthy and strong if the mothers came home to their starving kids with an apologetic, "Sorry, no bush-pigs today."

Since necessity really is the mother of invention, it was most likely the women who came up with pottery, weaving, basketry, the first agricultural implements, the preparation and preservation of food, and probably even herbal medicines. Perhaps the men concentrated more on devising ways to use the inedible parts of animals, —leather, bone, sinews— as tools.

The only stable groups among chimpanzees and gorillas are the mothers with their young, which constitute matrilineal social groups. Matrilineal clans among hunter-gatherer humans would appear to be a logical extension. Without recognition of the connection between copulation and childbirth (That connection has only been made in the last five or six thousand years.), there would be no way to determine who fathered who, or even that there was such a thing as a father.

With our new large brains, we must have, at one point, begun to attempt to explain the state of the world around us. These first at-

tempts resulted in religious and supernatural explanations. Microscopes wouldn't be available for awhile yet, so giving birth to new humans could only have been explained as a magical power that women held. This concept, along with the already stable matrilineal clans, and the clans' dependence on the reliability of women's food gathering, would point to matriarchies as a very probable form of social organization for hunter-gatherer humans.

It is difficult to think of any good reason for the natural evolution of monogamous pair-bonding. What possible advantages could one mother/father pair offer their offspring that a matrilineal clan, with its mothers, sisters, brothers, aunts, and uncles could not? Theories in support of pair-bonding are another example of the mis-application of Social Darwinism: they work from the assumption that because marriage exists today, there must be a perfectly good biological/evolutionary reason for it (and likewise for sexism). This kind of thinking is, of course, backwards. The past progresses toward the future, not the other way around.

We ended up our hunter-gatherer period with four basic logically evolved, sexually defined jobs: protector/hunter and mother/food-gatherer. Social organizations were based on loosely shifting groups of matrilineal clans.

* * *

With the dawn of civilization three things happened at once.

(1) We won the battle for survival as a species, our natural enemies were vanquished, our continued existence was assured.

(2) The number of jobs exploded. Today there are thousands of jobs; virtually none of them are sexually determinable by biological necessity. Even hunting, gathering, and child-raising need not be sexually defined any longer because we are no longer fighting for our survival as a species.

(3) Our environment(s) no longer has power over us via natural selection; we can change our environment in a split second of evolutionary time.

Today most of the jobs that women hold, besides the traditional childbearing and rearing ones, are drudgery jobs, jobs that require the least knowledge and swing the least power. Wherever the intellectually or physically challenging or powerful jobs are, men predominate. The line is not drawn between dangerous and less dangerous jobs (The health of women has hardly been of great concern,), but between drudgery and stimulation. We have all been very carefully socialized from birth to accept this. How did this happen?

The very nature of jobs plus the fact that a job explosion has just occurred points to the answer. With each new job comes knowledge (a more efficient way to make life easier) and with knowledge comes, not only a better life, but power. There was probably an initial power-struggle between the sexes over the new jobs and knowledge. Men, by virtue of their physical strength, won. The result was an ideology of sexism to justify their victory.

Instead of using their strength to fight

(the now non-existent) predators, men turned inward upon the females of their own species. Previously in our existence there were no such clashes between the sexes, because natural selection had perfectly fitted us to the two or four sexually determined jobs. With civilization and the job/knowledge explosion, natural selection halted in mid-step and everything was up for grabs.

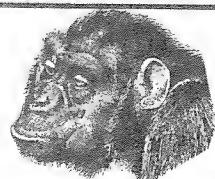
Instinctive inhibitions against physically harming or repressing one of your own species are quite strong in a normal creature in a natural environment. Combine these inhibitions with the superstitious belief of women's childbearing power, and the result would first have been a period of tension and see-sawing back and forth in this power-struggle. However, men's last and inexorable resort was superior strength, and as the less and less natural environment gave way to civilization, they would have been more and more apt to use that strength anyway. Placed in an unnatural setting, almost all animals will react adversely: violence takes a marked upward leap. When the connection between copulation and birth was finally made (before the discovery of the human egg) male "seed" demolished women's magical childbearing power and women's subjugation was complete.

It is unlikely that wild irrational back-lash ideologies like sexism can survive forever. After all, we do have these biological computers between our ears, and deep down, the illogic of sexism will keep nagging at us until it is resolved. Feminism is the catalyst for the eventual resolution.

As for future human evolution via natural selection, we can now just about kiss it all goodbye. Not only have we turned the tables on our environmental selectors, but for good measure we have introduced birth control and recombinant DNA technology. The only sure thing is that natural selection should continue to favor individuals with excellent adaptability and quick reactions. More than that seems impossible to predict.

It should be apparent to all of us that our species has come to a nexus point. Between un-governable population growth and the two-edged sword of technology, we are pushing Mother Earth and her resources into the danger zone. Ideologies like sexism (and racism and militarism) have pushed us to the critical point: nuclear holocaust. (But what else can you expect if you put an innocent, curious hominid in a roomful of space-age toys?)

Fortunately we have lifeboats to climb into and row like hell to saner waters. Feminism and other progressive movements, science, and our natural drive to explore and understand just might pull us through. It is comforting to note that for all of the violent perversity of this last 1% of our existence, it is just that: 1%. If we can hold on through this nexus point, if we learn fast enough, we will squirt through the other side into a future of unimaginable scope. It's time for *homo sapiens* to grow up. It's time to grab a lifeboat and row.



A Quadruple Dose of Dr. Kaveny's Terrestrial Pessimism

PHILIP KAVENY

In the technologically optimistic euphoria that followed World War 2, the popular consciousness turned away from the classical school of economics that is sometimes referred to as the dismal science. The cold equations of Malthus—geometric growth of population *vs.* arithmetic growth of the food supply—apparently were not immutable. Ricardo's theories on the scarcity of land were dismissed because, after all, humanity could simply colonize and farm space. Frederic Taylor, who developed the tools of scientific management in the late 19th Century, held out hope for a world of leisure, as his principles were applied to the use of machines to replace human thought and human labor. The economics of John Maynard Keynes told us that we could simply make the proper adjustments to our substantial productive machinery to end both poverty and scarcity. In short, our future seemed almost unbounded, limited only by our ability to dream.

This is not an article about what went wrong with our liberal dream. (I'll save that for a meeting of left-wing has-beens if I ever get involved in any more political activity.) The purpose of this article is to note that, while most 20th Century SF has reflected a mood of optimism about our future, several writers have moved against the grain. Within the body of work of four SF writers lies a dark vision of the future. The "dismal science" comes to a distressing confluence with popular culture in selected works of H. G. Wells, Kurt Vonnegut, Philip K. Dick, and Alice Sheldon.

Though H. G. Wells's scientific romances represent only a small portion of his total literary output, it is within them that his view of the future has become our specious present. Wells, in his earliest works, *The Time Machine*, *When the Sleeper Wakes*, and "Things to Come", addresses complex economic, cultural, and political issues in his favorite, most compact novelistic form. Wells, incidentally, later stated that this function of moral education and elucidation of complex problems was the most important function of the novelist. This position has put his work at odds with the majority of his literary contemporaries. In fact, Wells developed this theory long after he had ceased to write his scientific romances in the first decade of the 20th Century.

Briefly, there is a unifying factor in the three above-mentioned early works, a factor which asks the basic question: "What happens to the quality and substance of human life if the mode of production changes in such a manner as to make human effort irrelevant to the process of production?". In "Things to Come", workers are reduced to running each day on a treadmill in order to receive enough credits to survive. In *The Time Machine*, the world of Els and Morlocks makes us think about our own relationship to production. In a sense, we have become passive consumers to be bought and sold to the highest bidder. We exist, to a large extent,

only as passive units of consumption. Although these themes may not be constantly foregrounded in Wells's early work, nevertheless they are of great implicit significance.

Kurt Vonnegut takes the theme of evolution of a mode of production one step further in his brilliant novel *Player Piano*, in 1951. In this book, written during the post-World War 2 intoxication with machines controlling machines, Vonnegut suggests that there are only three choices available. If people test high enough, they may become engineers. If not there is only the army, or the reeks and wrecks, a kind of comical WPA. As long as there is enough surplus production, people are kept alive by what liberal economists call "transfer payments". For example, a friend of mine, a former Cook County social worker, said that Cook County welfare was to Chicago what GM was to Detroit. Vonnegut's prediction of transfer payments became a reality in the two decades after WW2. Since then things have gotten even worse than Vonnegut projected. With the ideology of supply-side economics and the proposed abolition of most welfare programs, not just the employment, but the physical survival of large segments of our population is threatened.

Philip K. Dick takes the cold equations of the "dismal science" outside of terrestrial confines in *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, written in the early '60s. Here we see Earth dying of accumulated heat. The possibility of escape to the outer planets is only a cruel illusion. There are no technological solutions, only an escape into the stronger illusions of the drugs qD and CAn D. This book, written almost 20 years ago, is a threatening vision of an emerging contemporary world. Dick's characters retreat further and further into themselves in order to avoid some inevitable catastrophe. As fuel costs and interest rates triple, and things that our parents took for granted become a cruel illusion for most of us, Dick's fictional view of the future looks frighteningly like our present.

Alice Sheldon (writing under the names James Tiptree Jr. and Raccoona Sheldon) shares a similar point of view with the three previously mentioned authors. In "The Screwfly Solution", written in 1976, because of a substance introduced in the the human nervous system by aliens who want the planet for themselves, the human male's sexual urge is short-circuited and irrevocably linked with violent tendencies. Sexual arousal leads to the random destruction of the human female and ultimately to the human race.

There are three points about this story that I find particularly interesting. The first is the tone, almost that of a subdued popular-science article. The second is the ideological justification that men in the story continually offer to explain their murderous behavior. To quote from a news report in the story,

The recent worldwide, though localized,

outbreaks of femicide appear to represent a recurrence of similar outbreaks by groups or sects which are not uncommon in world history in times of psychic stress. In this case the root cause is undoubtedly the speed of social and technological change augmented by population pressure. [The Nebula Award Winners 13, ed. by Samuel R. Delany (Bantam, 1980), P. 50.]

This quotation also aptly illustrates my third point. Though the plot of this story depends on the introduction of a non-terrestrial variable, the alien real-estate agent is actually unnecessary. Like the other SF works discussed in this article, "The Screwfly Solution" is about our world now. We need only to turn to contemporary mass media to see this same story being worked out on many levels, from accounts of random violence against women in news stories to the terrifying mix of sensuality and violence that is so often connected with album covers, punk rock, and mass-market men's magazines. In a very real sense, "The Screwfly Solution" may

come about on its own.

The future depicted in "Houston, Houston, Do You Read..." can be considered a possible extrapolation of the consequences of "The Screwfly Solution". When the male astronauts who figure in this story come out of a 300-year time warp to their own space but not their own time, they find that only women have survived (by cloning). Males have become superfluous to society's survival.

In the futures drawn by Wells, Vonnegut, Dick, and Sheldon, human evolution develops primarily through social, economic, and political structures, rather than through survival-of-the-fittest genetic phenotypes. The key thought is pessimistic: our social structures and means of production are evolving faster than our biological adaptation to our physical environment. These four SF writers see this evolutionary imbalance as setting the stage for disaster.

If this doesn't make you feel better, take two Quaaludes and call me in the morning.

CONTRIBUTORS' GALLERY

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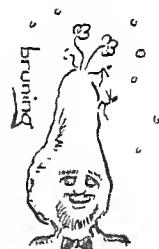
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self-portraits



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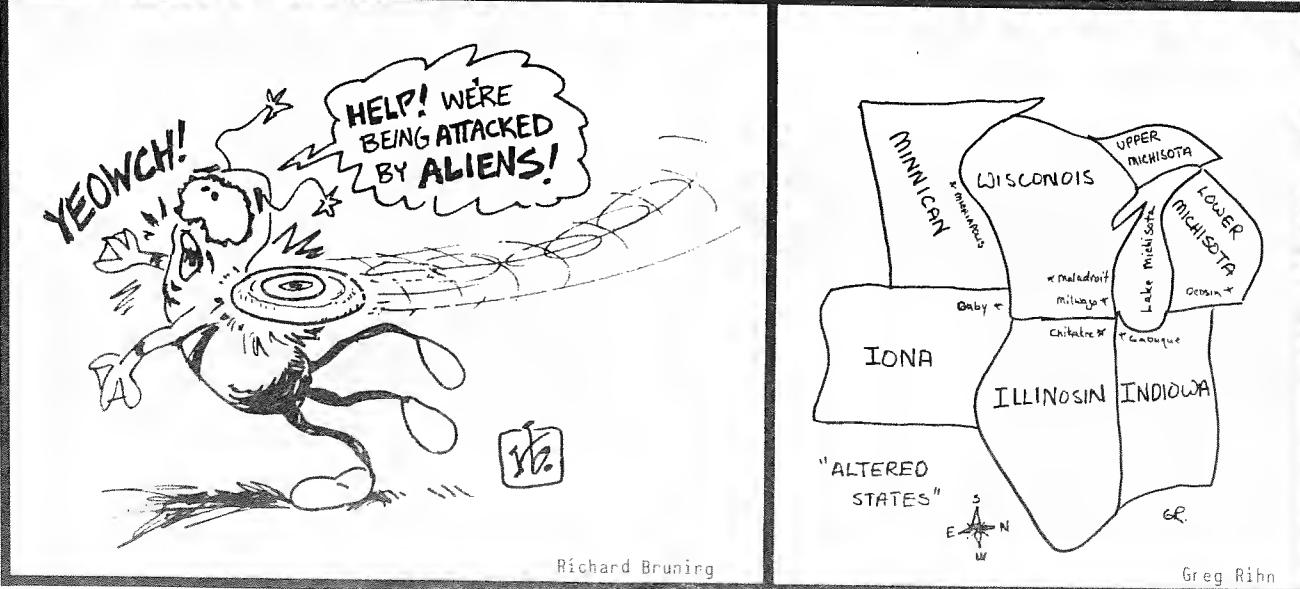
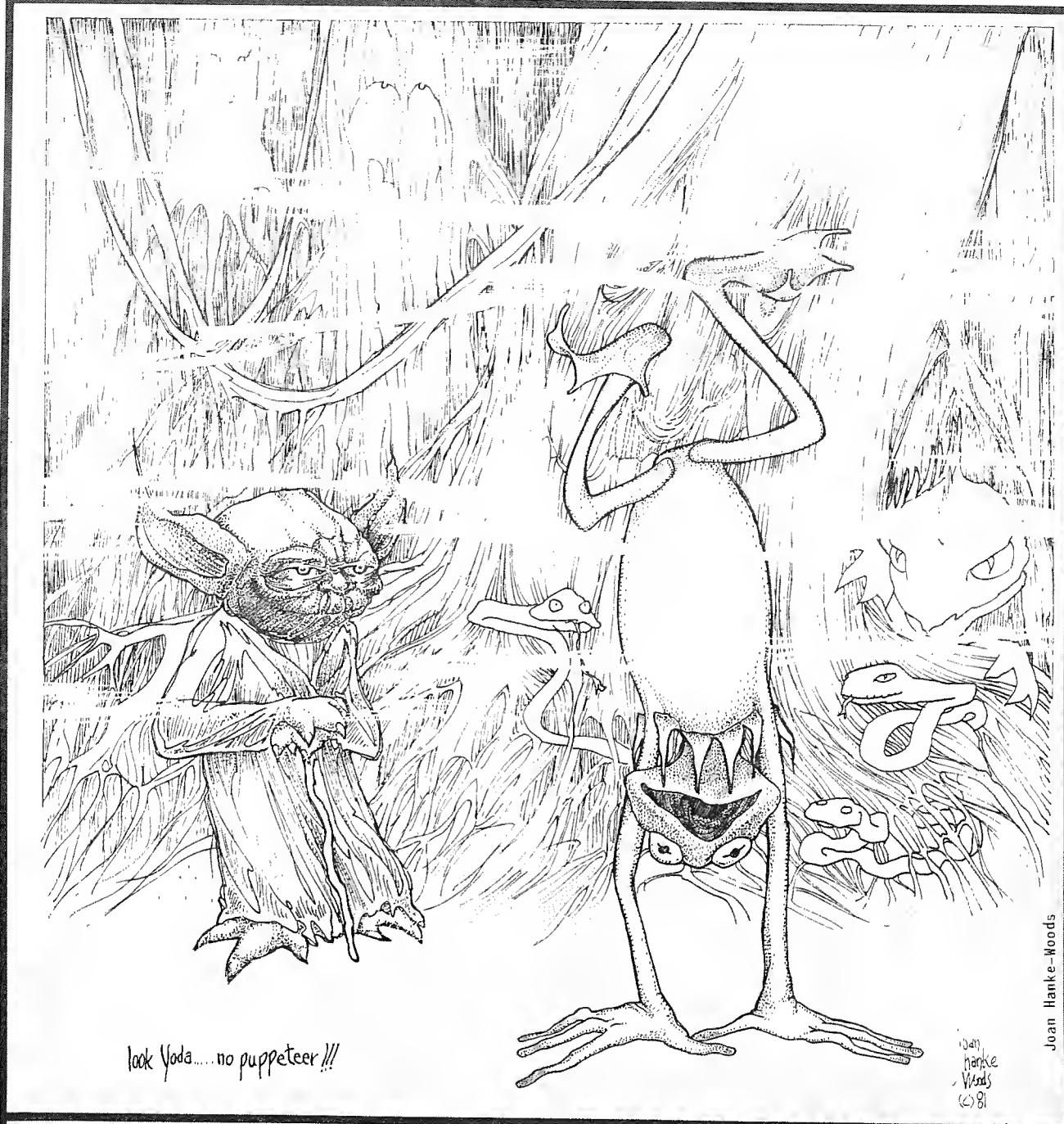
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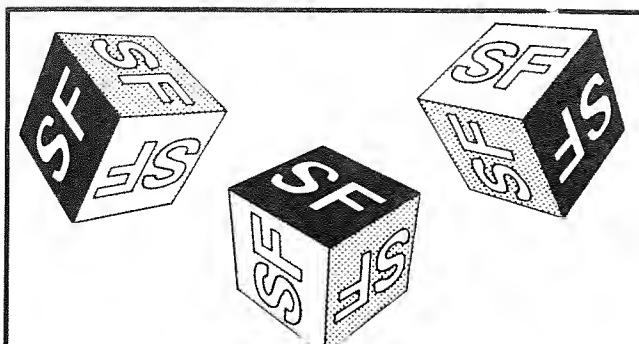


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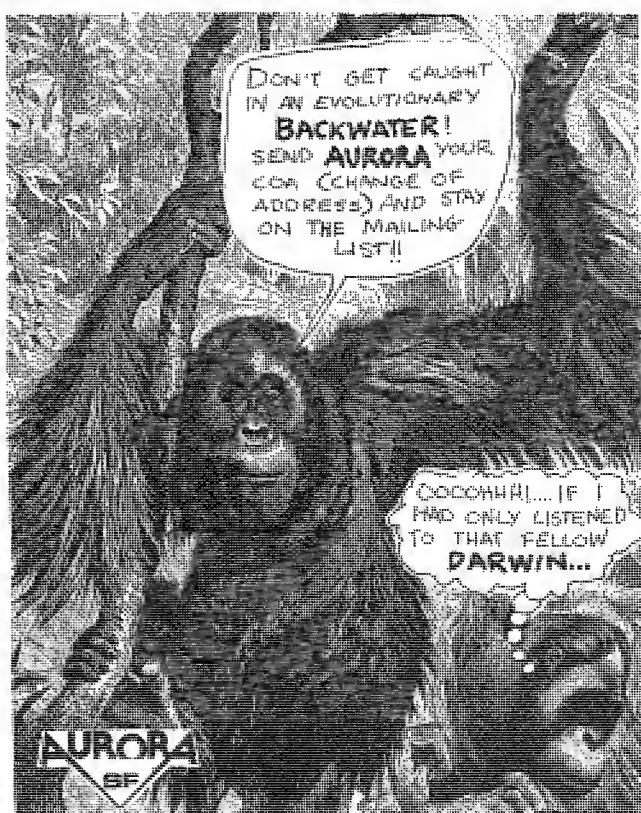
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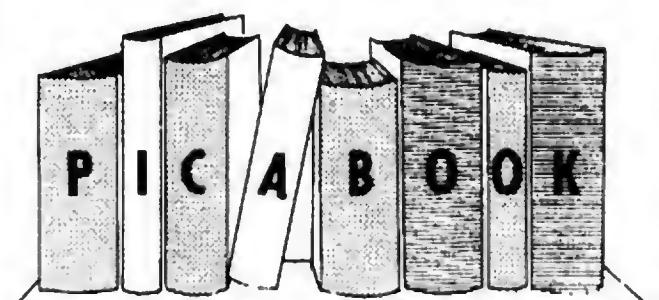
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ON CLOSER INSPECTION

Antonia Petniunas

WEINER: ...In going from corn to beans to meat, the insects worked up to food with progressively higher globulin content. This enabled them to reproduce faster, because the additional globulin improved their eggs. With this increased population they were stronger, not as individuals but as a whole community. A sheep or cow or dog has no trouble flicking off one tiny Animus, but no creature can shake off thousands of the things.

KRAMER: So they're competing with us through their sheer numbers?

WEINER: Yes, I'm afraid so. And it's not likely that they will suddenly leave our meat alone and go back to eating grasses, for two reasons. One, they seem to like meat and beans. Oh, some of the newborn will eat hay and corn at first, but after a while they too develop an insatiable desire for the more globulin-rich foods. And, two, there is evidence that an Animus which has gotten used to eating meat will be unable to readjust to eating anything with cellulose in it. In other words, those that have had a taste of meat can't go back to eating plants. The adult Animus, which has been spoiled by the most desirable food, can't digest anything less choice; its stomach acids have become too weak. In fact, even though the adult Animus is much larger than the juvenile, and looks stronger, it is actually weaker. The adults become fat and complacent. Some have also been found to have heart disease and other arterial complications usually associated with human beings....

An excerpt from Antonia Petniunas's teleplay for cable television, *On Closer Inspection*. The play takes place during a television interview of Dr. George Weiner, Director of the Emergency Task Force on Crop Failures. The world-wide infestation of the insect, Animus, has created a crisis for the world's food supply, but thus far, few have understood the full and terrible implications of the situation. *On Closer Inspection* has been televised several times on Cable Television Channel 4 in Madison, Wisconsin, and was shown twice last year at WisCon 5.